

THE
L I F E
OF
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.
COMPILED FROM
ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS;
WITH A
CRITICAL ESSAY
ON HIS

WRITINGS AND GENIUS.

By OWEN RUFFHEAD, Esq.

To which are added, *K*

Mr. POPE's LETTERS to a LADY,

(Never before published.)

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

D U B L I N :

Printed for S. POWELL, P. WILSON, J. EXSHAW,
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J. WILLIAMS, and C. INGHAM.

MDCCLXIX.





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THE following History hath been chiefly compiled from original manuscripts, which the writer had the honour to be entrusted with by the reverend and learned prelate, the Bishop of Gloucester, the intimate friend of Mr. POPE.

As a composition of this nature ought to be compleat in itself, without reference to any other work, the reader will, nevertheless, unavoidably meet with some repetitions of matter, which is already perhaps familiar to him.

In those instances, where the writer hath been indebted to others, more especially in what he hath borrowed from the Commentary and Notes, he hath, for the most part, followed the very words of the author, from whom the passages are

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

taken. As in justice to the public, he would not presume to alter expressions which he could not mend; so in justice to himself, he would not incur the suspicion, of attempting to conceal the true owner, by a pitiful variation.

With respect to the critical animadversions on Mr. POPE's writings, and genius, he is far from being over anxious to make others adopt his sentiments. He will think it sufficient, if his remarks should engage the reader to review his own opinions. Where he hath presumed to differ from the most respectable authorities, he would be rather understood to propose a doubt, than to offer a contradiction: he is not so vain, to make light of the opinions of others; nor yet so modest, to suppress his own. It will give him less concern, however, to expose his want of judgment, than to be conscious of the despicable insincerity of feigning a conviction, which he does not feel.

To some, perhaps, the extracts will appear too copious, and he once entertained thoughts of referring to the passages, he judged proper to select. But, beside the great trouble and incessant interruption, which this would have occasioned to the reader, it occurred to him that it would be impossible, more especially in our author's moral and didactic pieces, fully and candidly to exemplify the beauties and blemishes
of

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of his compositions, without giving a short connected view of the plan of each piece, and of his chain of reasoning; which contributes, in some instances, to constitute the peculiar excellencies and faults, which are most material to be remarked.

It would, to a few perhaps, have been sufficient to have pointed out particular beauties by inverted commas, or other marks of distinction; and the writer is aware of the ostentation of citing fine passages with *general applauses*, and *empty exclamations*, at the ends of them. But he recollected, that slight intimations do not always strike precipitate readers. Besides, it is scarce possible sometimes, when we are smitten with a fine passage, to suppress those involuntary bursts of applause—*Euge! atque belle!* though, in truth, they are but empty exclamations.

Whenever such may have escaped from his pen, he trusts that the candid reader will ascribe them to a solicitude, which made him rather earnest to do justice to the poet's merit, than to raise an admiration of his own judgment.

Should the following sheets, which have been the fruits of a leisure vacation, be deemed by his graver friends, too foreign from the line of his profession; he hath only to answer, that as the

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nature of the human mind requires diversity to preserve the edge of attention, so, to him, no kind of relaxation could have been more agreeable: and in his choice, he is justified by the authority of the great Lord Coke—After making certain allotments of time, not much perhaps to the taste of a modern student, this great sage of the law thus directs the application of the remainder—

Quod superest, ultro sacris largire camænis.

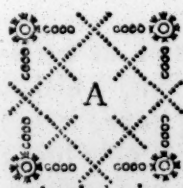
Middle-Temple,

Jan. 2, 1769.

OWEN RUFFHEAD.



T H E
L I F E
O F
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.


AMONG the chief beauties of a famous Italian poem, is the following allegory; so just and ingenious in the opinion of a great philosopher, that he has borrowed it to illustrate and adorn a general principle in one of his more capital works—Attached to the thread of every man's life, says the noble allegorist, is a little medal, whereon each man's name is inscribed, which TIME, waiting on the shears of FATE, catches up, as they fall from the inexorable steel, and bears to the river LETHE; into which, were it not for certain birds which keep flying about its banks, they would be immediately immersed. But these seize the medals ere they fall, and bear them for a while up and down in their beaks, with much noise and flutter; but careless of their charge, or unable to support it, they most of them soon drop their shining prey one after another into the oblivious stream. Nevertheless among these heedless carriers of fame, are a few *swans*, who, when they catch a medal, convey

it carefully to the Temple of IMMORTALITY, where it is consecrated.

These swans, of later ages, have indeed been *rarae aves*: What innumerable names have been dropped into the dark stream of oblivion, for one that has been consecrated in the bright temple of immortality!

When it is considered that the faculties which men receive from Nature, are perhaps nearly equal *, and that so few distinguish themselves by the play of any superior talents, we are curious to become acquainted with the history of those, who by their merits have transmitted their names to posterity; and are anxious to discover by what means they attained that degree of excellence, which immortalized their memories.

It is indeed difficult to assign the reasons why talents equally promising should, even under the like early cultivation, bear such unequal crops of fame. But if we attend minutely to the causes by which men have acquired renown, we shall find that perhaps the far greater part owed their reputation to adventitious circumstances, concurring to excite their emulation, and render application grateful.

Genius is not forward to endure the toil of persevering study. It is aspiring and impatient. Unless animated by the early dawn of enlivening hope, it will soon become torpid and supine: or at best only break forth by sudden and unequal starts. Praise and renown, are the rich rewards it covets. Praise, as POPE observes, is to a young wit, like rain to a tender flower. If it is not occasionally revived by refreshing showers of applause, it will shrink and wither.

* It would be too much to conclude with some systematical writers, that all men properly organized, are equally capable of the greatest efforts of genius: and that the inequality of talents is owing altogether to the difference of education. This is contradicted by daily experience. Education contributes mostly, but not wholly. Among youth, some are found to receive instruction with uncommon quickness of perception; while others, under the same preceptor, betray a slowness of apprehension, which evidently marks a constitutional difference between their mental faculties.

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The fruits of genius can only be matured by a constant and assiduous culture *; without it, excelling parts may now and then produce a momentary blaze, but will never diffuse that strong and steady splendor, which shines to latest posterity.

As such assiduity alone can procure and eternize the glory of public applause, so it is the best title from whence we can derive the heart-felt pleasures of self-commendation. To be proud of the gifts of nature, is a preposterous vanity. Our improvements only are what we can properly call our own, and which afford the most rational ground of inward approbation.

Various circumstances, however, frequently occur to check the habit of improvement. The same exquisite sensibility, and strong glow of spirits, which warms the genius, fires the libertine; and opens to every mode of dissipation. The blandishments of beauty, the joys of festivity, the attractions of pleasure, under all its alluring forms, conspire to withdraw the mind from great and noble pursuits. These allurements have greater or less ascendancy, in proportion as the objects of ambition are more or less distant. The habit of application will be vigorous or faint, as the reward proposed is great or small, near or remote. When genius wanders without a friendly guide to direct its steps, and encourage its progress; when it views but a faint prospect of reaping the rich rewards to which it aspires, then it too often becomes despondent †; and resigns itself to the fatal intoxication of the softer pleasures. Thus in many, the latent powers of the mind remain unknown even to the possessor; and to these, among other reasons, it may be imputed that so many

* The display of genius seems to depend on the power of attention, which is greater or less according to the strength of the passion which excites it: and this again in a great measure depends on certain constitutional, though unknown, differences in the structure of our minds.

† We now and then, it is true, meet with a rare instance, where the passion which inspires a genius, is so strong and irresistible, as to rise superior to all discouragements and oppositions.

stop short in the career of glory, and that their names never reach posterity.

Among the few distinguished characters, however, whose names are rescued from oblivion, and enrolled in the bright annals of fame, they stand in the most conspicuous line, who have reaped the harvest of glory, in the active scenes of life. The bulk of mankind, are more solicitous to learn the history of statesmen and warriors, than to be acquainted with the calm and tranquil pursuits of poets and philosophers.

The regular and uniform tenor of a studious life, affords little variety for the entertainment of those who are more amused by a succession of glaring incidents, which gratify idle curiosity; than affected by a history, which might tend to enlarge the fund of useful knowledge.

It is nevertheless of more general importance to be acquainted with what, in some degree, concerns men of every rank, than with that which can only be interesting to a few, who move in the higher stations. It is more essential to reflect on the means by which an obscure man made his way to fame, through the still paths of life, than to pry into the intrigues of ministers, or gape at the achievements of heroes.

Add to this, that in the histories of statesmen and warriors, we often admire merit which is not their own. They are often directed by those, whom they appear to guide. Accident, likewise, has a considerable share in the events, which render them celebrated. Nay, their very errors frequently, by strange and fortuitous occurrences, prove propitious to their fame.

But when we peruse the lives of the learned, when we admire the sentiments which adorn their pages, when we approve the moral and social rules, by which they framed their conduct; we then pay the just tribute of applause, where alone it is due.

At the same time it must be confessed, that even literary reputation has sometimes been undeservedly acquired, and unjustly withheld. There are not many readers perhaps who judge for themselves. The far greater part determine upon the authority of others,
rather

rather than from their own sentiments. Thus the partial judgment or caprice of some fashionable and overruling critic, often misleads the herd.

When a false judgment is once established, it is not easily subverted. They adhere most pertinaciously to their opinions, who build them on the authority of others. Men in general are not forward to condemn, what their fathers approved. Thus error gains a kind of prescriptive title: till some other admired critic, to whom the throng pay implicit homage, has the spirit and virtue to oppose mistaken prejudice, and set the public judgment right.

There have been some, however, in the learned world, whose merit stands on so fair and firm a basis, as not to need the prop of partiality to support it, or to be in danger of being shaken or undermined by prejudice or caprice.

Among the few whose fame is thus firmly rooted, Mr. POPE stands capitally distinguished. Our bard, however, experienced the common fate of every man who starts from the crowd. Ignorance and envy waged war against his merit. So true is Moliere's observation——

*La vertu dans le monde est toujours poursuivie,
Les envieux mouront, mais non jamais l'envie.*

His towering fame, however, soon soared above the reach of those obscure DUNCES, who would have stopped his aspiring growth. But envy would not quit her hold; and when she could no longer detract from the faculties of his mind, maliciously endeavoured to arraign the virtues of his heart.

With what little justice attempts have been made to depreciate either the one or the other, will be examined in the course of the following sheets; and as an admiration of his genius shall not pervert the justice of criticism, so neither shall regard for his virtues, be an inducement to conceal his failings.

The life of a studious man can consist of little else than a character of *himself*, and of his *writings*; and the history of the author and of the man are so intimately blended, that they serve to illustrate each other: since, to an accurate observer, the temper and morals of a writer generally breathe through his works.

In this history, therefore, which will contain the most interesting particulars of our poet's life, an account will be interwoven of his writings, as they are published in the *octavo* edition; with such animadversions as they may occasionally furnish: as likewise with remarks on such criticisms as have appeared on particular pieces: and from this review of his writings, an attempt will be made to form a general critique, on the nature, force and extent of his *genius*.

As a critical disquisition of this nature, however, will be more peculiarly calculated for the entertainment of the learned, the reader's attention will be occasionally relieved, and his curiosity gratified, by a detail of several anecdotes, concerning our author and his cotemporaries; of which many have never yet been made public.

Several instances likewise will be occasionally produced from his *unpublished* letters, of the strict correspondence between his public and private sentiments. Such a comparison, it is apprehended, will be of singular benefit; for a reader cannot fail to receive additional delight and profit, when he is convinced of the sincerity of the writer's sentiments: which cannot be better demonstrated, than by such an exemplification.

Lastly, his *moral* character will be particularly exemplified in all its various relations: and this part of the design will be of the most general use; for though, to many, the account of the author may be most entertaining, yet the history of the man will be found most instructive. All may, and ought to, emulate the
latter,

latter, though very few are blest with powers to rival the former.

Having thus stated the plan of the ensuing history, it next remains to make the reader acquainted with the circumstances of our author's life.

In the histories of celebrated persons, we frequently meet with fabulous relations of miraculous incidents, which attended them either in the womb, or in the cradle, as prophetic of their future eminence. We do not find, however, that any thing remarkable happened to our poet, either at his birth, or during his early infancy. No bees were seen to hang upon his lips, no doves bound his temples with the laurel of Apollo, or the myrtle of Venus.

He was born in London, on the 21st day of May, in the year 1688, and was christened by the name of Alexander. He descended from a good family in Oxfordshire, and we are indebted to the base and illiberal aspersions * which malice attempted to throw on his character, for the following short account of his genealogy.

His father, whose Christian name was likewise Alexander, was a considerable merchant, and a distant relation to the Earl of Downe, whose sole heiress married the Earl of Lindsey. Our poet's mother, Editha, was the daughter of William Turner, Esq; of York. She had three brothers, one of whom was killed, another died, in the service of King Charles I. And the

* In one of Curl's and other pamphlets, Mr. POPE's father was said to be a mechanic, a hatter, a farmer, nay a bankrupt; but what is strange, a nobleman (if such a reflection could be thought to come from a nobleman) had dropt an allusion to that pitiful untruth, in a paper, called *An Epistle to a Doctor in Divinity*. The following line likewise——

“ Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure.”

fell from a like courtly pen, in certain verses to the imitator of Horace.—Our author, by way of refutation of these mean falsehoods, was tempted to publish the account of his genealogy which is given above.

eldest

eldest, becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after the sequestrations and forfeitures of her family.

Our bard was naturally of a tender and delicate constitution, but of a temper nevertheless peculiarly sweet and engaging ; these circumstances, no doubt, contributed to endear him to his parents, for, as on the one hand, the mildness and suavity of his disposition attracted their love, so on the other hand, the imbecility of his frame, excited a tender commiseration ; and thus both co-operated to increase and confirm their parental affection.

It was probably owing to their tenderness for him, that it was late before he was sent to school, having in his childhood been taught to read by an aunt. By the time he was seven or eight years old, he is said to have taken uncommon delight in reading : and it is remarkable that he learned to write by imitating print, which he copied with great correctness and exactness.

When he attained his eighth year, he was placed under the private tuition of one Taverner, a priest *, who lived somewhere in Hampshire ; from him he learned the rudiments of the Latin and Greek tongues, and he made a very considerable progress under the care of this instructor.

At this very early age, he discovered the bent of his genius. About that time, he chanced to meet with Ogilby's translation of Homer, and was so smitten with the subject, that he read it with great avidity and delight ; being then too young to be disgusted, by the poverty and insipidity of the version. He soon after took Sandys's Ovid in hand, and the agreeable impressions he received from these indifferent translations, were so powerful, that he ever after continued to speak of them with pleasure.

* His family was of the Romish religion, in which he himself was educated, and constantly professed : but an occasion will occur hereafter to speak more particularly of his religious principles.

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He did not remain long, however, under the tuition of the priest; he was sent from him, in a little time, to a private school at Twiford near Winchester. Neither did he continue there any considerable time; for in about a year he was removed from thence to a school near Hydepark Corner, being then about ten years of age. At these schools, he made no proficiency, but rather lost, under these two last negligent masters, what he had acquired under the former. He was himself so sensible of the insufficiency of his master at Twiford, that, among his earliest pieces, he wrote a very just satire, exposing the failings and defects he had discovered in him.

In the course of his school exercises however, he translated above one fourth of Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, besides detached pieces here and there. The translation of the *Thebaid* of Statius, was likewise among the productions of his childhood, but finding the verses, on a review of them, better than he expected, he gave it some correction in his riper years, and put it into the form wherein it is now printed in the octavo edition.

While he was at the school near Hyde-Park Corner, the attention paid to his conduct was so remiss, that he was suffered to frequent the playhouse in company with the greater boys. At his years, and with his cast of genius, it is easy to conceive that the novelty of theatrical representation, must have made a more than ordinary impression on his mind. He was so forcibly smitten with the charms of the drama, that he was disposed to imitation, and applied himself to turn the chief transactions of the *Iliad* into a kind of play, composed of a number of speeches from Ogilby's translation, tacked together with verses of his own.

By his early abilities and winning disposition, he had acquired such influence among his school-fellows, that he persuaded some of the upper boys to take parts in a representation of this juvenile piece, and he prevailed on the master's gardener to act the character of Ajax. The dresses of the actors were all modelled after the fashion of the prints in his favourite Ogilby, which,

as some have remarked, formed the chief merit of that book, they having been designed and engraved by artists of note.

At the age of twelve, he went to reside at Binfield, in Windsor-Forest, with his father, who had retired thither from business about the time of the revolution: and, having converted all his effects into money, he is said to have brought with him into the country, near 20,000*l*. Being a papist, he could not vest his money on real security; and as he adhered to the interest of James, he deemed it a point of conscience not to lend it to the new government. He therefore locked up this sum in his chest, and lived upon the principal, till by that time his son came to the succession, a great part of it was consumed. To this mistaken pertinacity, our bard, speaking of his father, alludes in the following lines, in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot:

“ For right hereditary tax’d and fin’d,
“ He stuck to poverty, with peace of mind.”

Soon after our author was, for a few months, placed under the tuition of another priest, one Deane, from whose instructions, however, he received very little benefit, having made no farther progress under him, than that of being able to construe a little of Tully’s Offices.

Our poet was often heard to say, that he could never follow any thing which he did not pursue with pleasure: and his masters either wanted sagacity to discover the bent of his genius, or talents to adapt their instructions accordingly, so as to render his studies an amusement to him. Finding that he profited so little under their tuition, he formed a noble resolution, at this early period of life, of becoming his own master, and he began to cultivate his talents with unwearied sedulity. The method of study which he prescribed to himself for this purpose, was the reading of the classic writers, more especially of the poets, to whom he applied with great eagerness and enthusiasm.

It is in our early years, that the true bent of genius is discovered. It then acts spontaneously, nay in some,

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as has been intimated, it is so powerful as even to act against opposition. Mr. POPE's passion for poetry was so strong, that he often declared he began to write verses earlier in life than he could call to memory; and he says, in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot:

“ I list'd in numbers, for the numbers came.”

When he was yet a child, his father would frequently set him to make English verses, and, though no poet, was nevertheless so very difficult to be pleased, that he would make his son correct them again and again. When they were to his mind, he took pleasure in perusing them, and would say, “ These are good rhymes.” It has been well observed, that the early praises of a tender and respected parent, co-operating with the powerful bias of natural inclination in the son, might fix our young bard in his ambition to become eminent in this art.

It seems, however, that his father had sometimes recommended to him the study of physic *, but this could be no more than a bare recommendation, since our author himself assures us, in the epistle above-mentioned, that he broke no duty, nor disobeyed any parent by commencing poet —

“ I left no calling for this idle trade,

“ No duty broke, no father disobey'd.”

By the time he was fifteen, having made a very respectable proficiency in the learned languages, he expressed a very strong desire of removing to London, in order to learn French and Italian. His family, whose solicitude chiefly regarded the improvement and preservation of his health, and who knew that his miserable infirm state of body, would never suffer him to travel abroad, where those languages might be of most use to him, could not help considering his design as wild and extravagant. He nevertheless persisted in it;

* Letter 8th, to Cromwell.

and they yielding to his importunities, he came to town, where he mastered those languages with surprising dispatch. It was very remarkable, that though he was vastly impatient of restraint in the common scholastic forms of education, yet, now he was his own master, he readily subjected himself to the fatigue and drudgery of perpetually recurring to grammars and dictionaries: by which means, with a strong appetite for knowledge, which made him intent on every subject he read, he insensibly made himself master of the learned and modern languages.

His passion for poetry, however, being predominant, he was eager to explore all the treasures of Parnassus; and between this and his twentieth year, he devoted himself entirely to the reading of the most considerable poets and critics in the Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and English languages. About this time likewise, he made a translation of Tully *de Senectute*, a copy of which, it is said, is preserved in Lord Oxford's library.

In all this time, he has been heard to declare that he never read any treatise on the art of logic or rhetoric. Locke indeed fell into his hands, but he confessed that his essay was at first quite insipid to him. Nature, however, having early disposed him to method in his compositions, and philosophic reflection quickly following, and soon enabling him to correct the flights of his imagination, as clearly appears from his juvenile letters, he became delighted with that *precision of thought*, which is the characteristic of that immortal essay: and Mr. Locke had so warmed and fortified his innate love of truth, that the only thing, he used to say, he could never forgive his philosophic master, was the dedication to the essay*.

He likewise read Sir William Temple's essays; but when he met with any thing political in them, he owned that he had no manner of relish for it. This

* This dedication, though it contains many just and sensible remarks, is in general couched under such terms of unmanly adulation, as degrade the scholar and the philosopher.

disrelish for politics, continued throughout his whole life: and farther than a warm love for his country, which never could mislead him, and for his friends, which sometimes, perhaps, did, (that is, his judgment only) his indifference at last ended in aversion. In a word, his early studies were confined to poetry, and the Belles Lettres*. But still, as he assures us, he read without any design but that of pleasing himself. He prosecuted such studies as accident threw in his way, or as the caprice of fancy inclined him to pursue. He used to observe, that, during this time, he was like a boy gathering flowers in the fields and woods, just as they rose before him; and he always spoke of these four or five years, which were passed in mere curiosity and amusement, as the most pleasing part of his life.

Whenever he met with any passage or story which delighted him more than common, it was his custom to imitate it. But he has often declared, that the first propensity to imitation, proceeded rather from motives of modesty, than vanity. He perceived how defective his own productions were, and endeavoured to mend his composition by copying the capital strokes of others: and thus he became a poet, as the best artists have become painters, by copying from the *ancients*; with this difference only, that as he frequently copied the best *moderns* likewise, which those painters had not the same opportunity of doing in their art, he as commonly excelled as he copied.

Mr. POPE's discernment, however, was too acute not to perceive the defects of such irregular and desultory habits of study. For though a retentive memory and correct judgment enabled him to remedy many of those defects, they at the same time contributed to render him more sensible of them all. At twenty therefore, when the impetuosity of his spirits began to sub-

* He used to declare, that of the Latin poets, he preferred Statius next after Virgil; and that of the Italian, he liked Tasso better than Ariosto. His taste in this latter respect had not been vitiated like Milton's, by much reading of the Gothic romances of chivalry.

side, and his genius grew more patient of restraint, he subjected himself to the toil of renewing his studies from the beginning, and went through the several parts of a learned education, upon a more regular and well-digested plan. He penetrated into the general grounds and reasons of speech; he learned to distinguish the several species of stile; he studied the peculiar idiom of each language, with the genius and character of each author; he mastered those parts of philosophy and history*, which mostly contributed to enrich the store of sentiment: and lastly, he reduced his natural talent for poetry, to a science.

From the age of twenty to twenty-seven, he pursued this system with unremitted attention and severity; and he used to say, that he had spent these seven years, in unlearning all that he had acquired before.

Many circumstances, however, contributed to fix him in a habit of persevering industry. His constitution was too infirm and delicate to sustain the violent agitations of licentious pleasures: so that his tender frame preserved him from those modes of intemperance, to which genius, in particular, has often proved a victim. The strength of the passions, as has been hinted, will always be in proportion to the vigour of the imagination. For true genius, as is well observed by a critic whom I shall shortly have occasion to mention, rarely resides in a cold phlegmatic constitution. But his sickly state of health soon making him sensible of sensual excesses, he was early checked from giving way to those allurements, which, unless the mind is armed with a due portion of firmness, lead to every species of inertness and dissipation.

Perhaps too the uncomeliness of his person, might not be without some effect. It has been well remarked

* Our author, in his riper years, used to say, that the true use of reading was not to know facts, but to understand human nature, and therefore recommended the study of history. "I should read," said he, in a very different manner now than when I had my early fit of reading, from 14 to 20. Then it was merely from the amusement the story afforded me, now it should be with the view of learning how to make myself and others better."

by Lord Bacon, that whoever hath any thing fixed in his person, that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur within himself, to rescue and deliver himself from scorn. This consideration, therefore, might render our poet more assiduous to cultivate his mental faculties, that he might atone for the defects of an ungraceful figure, by the accomplishments of an elegant and polished mind.

As these considerations were incentives to his industry, so the condition of his circumstances proved propitious to the perfection of his studies. For, in the early part of his life, he inherited a decent competence, sufficient to defray all the expences which his constitution and appetites required. Being free from want and dependence, he was under no necessity to produce fugitive incorrect pieces for a present supply; or to prostitute his talents to serve the interest of a bookseller, or flatter the depravity of the times.

During his retirement in Windsor-Forest, he became acquainted with Sir William Trumball†, who, in the year 1691, was appointed one of the principal secretaries of state, which office he resigned in the year 1697, and retired to East-Hamstead, the place of his nativity, which was near Binfield; and it was not long before Mr. POPE was introduced to him. Sir William delighted in learned converse, being of a studious turn, and particularly inclined to classical and polite literature. Our poet, therefore, could not fail of being agreeable to one with whom nature had formed him to assimilate, notwithstanding the inequality of their years: and Sir William soon admitted him to a share of his friendship. They associated together on terms of intimacy, and, when they were separated, a literary correspondence subsisted between them, so long as Sir William lived; and at his death, Mr. POPE did justice to his memory, by the epitaph now extant among his works.

† Among other singularities in the character of this statesman, it is said, that in the year 1687, being appointed ambassador to the Ottoman Porte, he performed the journey on foot.

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Perhaps too the uncomeliness of his person, might not be without some effect. It has been well remarked

* Our author, in his riper years, used to say, that the true use of reading was not to know facts, but to understand human nature, and therefore recommended the study of history. "I should read," said he, "in a very different manner now than when I had my early fit of reading, from 14 to 20. Then it was merely from the amusement the story afforded me, now it should be with the view of learning how to make myself and others better."

by Lord Bacon, that whoever hath any thing fixed in his person, that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur within himself, to rescue and deliver himself from scorn. This consideration, therefore, might render our poet more assiduous to cultivate his mental faculties, that he might atone for the defects of an ungraceful figure, by the accomplishments of an elegant and polished mind.

As these considerations were incentives to his industry, so the condition of his circumstances proved propitious to the perfection of his studies. For, in the early part of his life, he inherited a decent competence, sufficient to defray all the expences which his constitution and appetites required. Being free from want and dependence, he was under no necessity to produce fugitive incorrect pieces for a present supply; or to prostitute his talents to serve the interest of a bookseller, or flatter the depravity of the times.

During his retirement in Windsor-Forest, he became acquainted with Sir William Trumball†, who, in the year 1691, was appointed one of the principal secretaries of state, which office he resigned in the year 1697, and retired to East-Hamstead, the place of his nativity, which was near Binfield; and it was not long before Mr. POPE was introduced to him. Sir William delighted in learned converse, being of a studious turn, and particularly inclined to classical and polite literature. Our poet, therefore, could not fail of being agreeable to one with whom nature had formed him to assimilate, notwithstanding the inequality of their years: and Sir William soon admitted him to a share of his friendship. They associated together on terms of intimacy, and, when they were separated, a literary correspondence subsisted between them, so long as Sir William lived; and at his death, Mr. POPE did justice to his memory, by the epitaph now extant among his works.

† Among other singularities in the character of this statesman, it is said, that in the year 1687, being appointed ambassador to the Ottoman Porte, he performed the journey on foot.

This retirement in the forest, could not be otherwise than grateful to a studious mind, and we may judge of the impressions it made, from our poet's having, about this time, composed his Ode on *Solitude*, which is the first fruit now extant of his poetical genius, and which strongly paints that tranquil, contemplative, and moral cast of mind, which distinguished the writer*.

In this retreat, likewise, he first became acquainted with the writings of Waller, Spencer, and Dryden. The works of Spencer, he perused with great delight, and renewed his acquaintance with them in his riper years. But on the first view of Dryden's works, he was so struck with the excellence of a writer, whose talents were congenial with his own, that he abandoned the rest, and studied his writings with uncommon pleasure and unremitted attention. He used to say, that Dryden had improved the art of versification beyond any of the preceeding poets, and that he would have been perfect in it, had he not been so often obliged to write with precipitation. His works, therefore, served as one of the models from whence our poet copied, and he even adopted the very turns of his periods: just as Mr. Addison did those of Sir William Temple in prose, not less strongly marked than the imitations of the poet, though less commonly observed. In short, from Dryden principally, our bard learned all the magic of his versification.

From the time he became so enamoured of Dryden's works, he grew impatient to see the author, and at length procured a friend to introduce him to a coffee-house which Dryden frequented, where he had the satisfaction of seeing him. But Dryden died before any intimacy could take place between them, which Mr. POPE often lamented, particularly in his first letter to Mr. Wycherley, in the following pathetic man-

* We must not infer from hence, however, what a learned critic would insinuate, that Mr. POPE's genius was confined, and that he was not master of a creative and glowing imagination, the "*Acer spiritus ac vis*." But the nature, force, and extent of his genius, will be best determined by a progressive and candid examination of his several pieces.

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ner,—“*Virgilium tantum vidi.*” He never spoke of him without a kind of rapturous veneration, and he makes respectable mention of him in several parts of his works.

During his residence in the forest, our poet, being then between the years of thirteen and fifteen, composed a comedy and a tragedy. With regard to the subject of the former, we are wholly in the dark; the latter however was founded on a story taken from the legend of St. Genevieve. But whether he distrusted his talents for dramatic poetry, or whether he was cautious of hazarding his fame on the fickle taste of a captious audience, he could never be prevailed on to write for the stage, though he was strongly importuned by several, and particularly by Betterton*, with whom he was acquainted from a boy†.

In

* It appears to have been Mr. Betterton's good fortune, to have been not only admired as a player, but esteemed as a man. In the postscript to one of our author's letters to Mr. Cromwell, he speaks of him in a manner, which does honour to his memory.

“This letter of deaths, puts me in mind of poor Mr. Betterton's; over whom I would have this sentence of Tully for an epitaph, which will serve him as well in his *moral*, as in his *theatrical* capacity—

“*Vitae bene actae jucundissima est recordatio.*”

In another letter to the honourable J. C. he speaks of him with greater warmth of affection—“I am very glad, says he, for the sake of his widow, and for the credit of the deceased, that Betterton's remains are fallen into such hands, as may render them reputable to the one, and beneficial to the other. Besides the public acquaintance I long had with that poor man, I also had a slender knowledge of his parts and capacity by private conversation, and ever thought it pity he was necessitated, by the straitness of his fortune, to act (and especially to his latest hours) an imaginary and fictitious part, who was capable of exhibiting a real one, with credit to himself, and advantage to his neighbour.”

† Mr. Cromwell likewise pressed our author very strongly to pay his court to the Tragic Muse, as appears from the following passage.

“Leave

In his latter days he told a particular friend that he had a strong propensity to the tragic drama, and should certainly have made it his principal study, had not the moral and intellectual characters of the players of his time, so different from that of Betterton, always deterred him from putting his design in execution. And whoever has carefully observed, in his other works, the profound penetration into nature, and easy sublime of expression, together with his uncommon correctness of judgment, will hardly doubt but he would have succeeded to the utmost of his ambition, and what is more to his own satisfaction, in the merit of theatrical composition.

Soon after his composing these dramatic pieces, our poet had the courage to attempt the arduous task of writing an epic poem, which he called *Alcander* †, of which he wrote four books of about a thousand verses each. Into this piece he confessed, though with a ridicule on the attempt, that he had thrown all his learning, as Milton has done with too much profusion, in his *Paradise Lost*. This *Alcander* was chiefly an imitative poem, in which Mr. POPE had collected the fe-

“Leave elegy and translation to the inferior class, on whom the Muses only glance now and then, like our winter’s sun, and then leave them in the dark. Think on the dignity of tragedy, which is of the greater poetry, as Dennis says, and foil him at his other weapon, as you have done in criticism. Every one wonders that a genius like yours will not support the sinking drama; and Mr. Wilkes (tho’ I think his talent is comedy) has expressed a furious ambition to swell in your buskins.”

‡ As some, perhaps, may be curious of farther information respecting this early and adventurous essay, it may not be improper to subjoin the following particulars. *Alcander* was a prince of Rhodes, driven from his crown by Deucalion, father of Minos. In this epic piece, *Alcander* displayed all the virtues of suffering, like Ulysses, and all the courage of Eneas. Apollo, as the patron of Rhodes, was *Alcander*’s great protector; and Cibeles was his great enemy, as being patroness of Deucalion and Crete. She raises a storm against him, as Juno does against Eneas: he is cast away, and swims to shore, as Ulysses did, to the island of Phœacia.

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veral beauties of all the epic writers he was then acquainted with *.

It is the characteristic of a great genius to make early efforts far beyond its strength. Our poet, however, was sensible of the weakness of this attempt, and speaks of it with the most amiable frankness, in a passage restored to the excellent preface before his works. "I confess," says he, "there was a time when I was in love with myself, and my first productions were the children of self-love upon innocence. I had made an epic poem, and panegyrics on all the princes of Europe, and I thought myself the greatest genius that ever was. I cannot but regret these delightful visions of my childhood, which, like the fine colours we see when our eyes are shut, are vanished for ever."

Atterbury, the Bishop of Rochester, a little before he left England, advised him to burn it, which he did §, though, as he confessed, with some regret.

The bishop, on this occasion, in one of his letters to Mr. POPE, expresses himself thus—"I am not sorry your Alcander is burnt; had I known your intentions, I would have interceded for the first page, and put it, with your leave, among my curiosities." As a proof, however, that this early piece was deeply imprinted in his memory, and that he was not partial to its imperfections, he took a pleasure in laughing at the childish extravagances in this poem, and in mentioning them to his friends. Among these, was a description of a Scythian hero, who contemned a pillow, though of snow, as luxury and effeminacy. Some of these extravagances, are pleasantly produced for examples in the art of *sinking in poetry*, under the title of verses by an Anony-

* Among other proposals, which Betterton made him to write for the stage, he strongly pressed him to turn this Alcander into a tragedy; but no importunity could prevail on Mr. POPE to engage in such an undertaking.

§ It may not be immaterial to add, that the dramatic pieces above spoken of, shared the same fate.

mous. He must be a writer of true genius, who has the virtue to ridicule his own defects.

The ridicule, however, of this juvenile attempt, did not discourage him from once more attempting this species of composition ; for, in his riper years, he formed a design of writing an epic poem, founded on a story recorded in the old annalist Geoffrey of Monmouth, concerning the arrival of Brutus the supposed grandson of Æneas into our island, and the settlement of the first foundations of the British monarchy, of which more hereafter.

Mr. POPE's next poetical essay, after this epic piece of Alcander, was his *Pastorals*, which he wrote at the age of sixteen : and he used to say pleasantly, that herein he literally followed the passage in Virgil, where he says,

“ *Cum canerem reges et praelia,*” &c.

Being now come to such part of his works, as have undergone the trials of criticism ; it remains agreeably to the plan proposed, to examine the several pieces respectively, in the order they stand in the *octavo* edition.

This examination, however, will not be made with the partial bias of a panegyrist, in order to rescue his writings from just censure ; but to measure them by the scale of candid criticism, the better to ascertain the nature, force, and extent of his genius.

The name of a critic, being generally received in an ill sense, is become odious, because the office hath been abused by half learned or envious wittlings ; who have been curious to detect blemishes, forgetting the other and more pleasing task of a critic, which is to point out beauties.

Many of those who have occasionally criticised on our poet, have written only to expose their ignorance or their ill nature. Peace to the remains of futility and envy !

There

There is one however, (the author of *An Essay on the genius and writings of Pope*) who * has undertaken the office in form; and has, so far as he has gone, executed it, at least with politeness and elegance. If I am inclined to dispute some of his principles, and cannot always subscribe to the propriety of his applications, I shall at least, wherever I dissent from him, endeavour to express myself with the same temper, and with the same decorum. Persuaded as I am, that the learned writer meant to fix the true merit of our poet, and to serve the cause of literature; and being conscious that I am influenced by the same motives, I shall freely animadvert on the errors and inaccuracies of the critic, and as candidly admit the justice of his censure, and the propriety of his corrections. In this critique, however, I shall pursue a different method from the author of the Essay: for before he enters into any examination of our poet's writings, he, in his dedication to Dr. Young, and in other places, more than hints his opinion of the nature and extent of our poet's genius. But I propose first to analyze Mr. POPE's writings, and from thence shall attempt to ascertain the nature

* This work is anonymous, but the name of the author is well known to the learned world. As he has himself, however, thought proper to conceal it from the public, I do not think myself at liberty to proclaim it: for though the merit of the work is such, as, upon the whole, might do credit to any name, yet it is but decent to allow every writer to be the best judge of what conduces to his own interest and reputation. At the same time, I will be free to observe, that though this essay is evidently the work of an elegant critic and polite scholar; yet it by no means answers to the title. Passages are frequently cited from Mr. POPE, without the least remark upon them; and only serve to introduce a string of anecdotes and quotations concerning foreign writers, or perhaps foreign subjects. This method, it is true, is extremely entertaining to readers of a certain class; but it is rather too miscellaneous and digressive: and, let it be said, without envy or ill-manners, that it savours too much of a lavish display of erudition, to which a writer, of such approved learning, might have deemed himself superior.

and force of his genius: for as I should blush to mislead, so I equally scorn to prepossess the reader.

The *pastorals* are the first pieces which fall under the examination of our critic; and with respect to these, he observes in the very opening, "that it is somewhat strange that in the pastorals of a young poet, there should not be found a single rural image that is new." As the essayist, in the course of his criticisms, frequently objects a barrenness of invention to Mr. POPE, it is to be wished that he had previously defined what *invention* is, or at least what he intended by the use of that word. As he has omitted it however, an attempt will be made in its proper place, to ascertain the meaning of *invention*, the better to determine how far the want of it may be imputed to Mr. POPE.

At present it is sufficient to observe, that was it true as the critic objects, that there is not a single rural image in these pastorals that is new, it is no more than what our poet himself premises, with that candor and modesty which is ever attendant on genuine merit. For in his excellent discourse prefixed to these pastorals, he concludes with the following declaration. "But after all, if they have any merit, it is to be attributed to some good old authors, whose works as I had leisure to study, so I hope I have not wanted care to imitate." Notwithstanding this modest declaration, perhaps some passages may be justly deemed original.

It is observable that a pastoral is appropriated to each season of the year, and that the scene as well as the hour of the day, is artfully distinguished in each, which in some instances gives a peculiar beauty to the imagery; as in the following couplet describing the *summer* season: the scene is by a river side; and the time of the day, *noon*.

"Where dancing sun-beams on the waters play'd,
"And verdant Alders form'd a quiv'ring shade."

These

These lines are perfectly picturesque, nor are the following inferior.

- “ Soft as he mourn’d, the streams forgot to flow,
 “ The flocks around a dumb compassion show,
 “ The naiads wept in ev’ry watry bow’r,
 “ And Jove consented in a silent show’r.”

Though it may be allowed that the new images in these pastorals are not frequent, yet in truth, it is too much to say, that they do not afford a single image that is new. Let any reader of sensibility attend to the following lines in the second pastoral, where the poet describes the charms of his mistress’s voice.

- “ But would you sing and rival Orpheus’ strain,
 “ The wond’ring forest soon should dance again,
 “ The moving mountains hear the pow’rful call,
 “ *And headlong streams hang list’ning in their fall.*”

The last line surely presents a *new* image, and a bold one too *.

The following couplet likewise from the fourth pastoral, describing the effects occasioned by the death of Daphne, affords a new image, and the personification has a fine effect.

* Perhaps it will be thought that Mr. POPE had Milton’s Masque in remembrance, wherein the latter speaks of Thyrsis,

- “ —whose artful strains have oft delay’d
 “ The huddling brook to hear his madrigal.”

But this, compared to Mr. POPE’s, is rather *narrative* than *descriptive*. Mr. POPE presents us with the *image* of *attention*, which is purely his own.

I cannot avoid taking notice of these beautifully plaintive lines in the same pastoral, which are not imitations of any writer I know of.

- “ Once I was skill’d in ev’ry plant that grew,
 “ And ev’ry herb that drinks the morning dew;
 “ Ah! wretched shepherd, what avails thy art
 “ To cure thy lambs, but not to heal thy heart.”

" The balmy *zephyrs*, silent since her death,
 " Lament the ceasing of a sweeter breath *."

The same may be said of the following beautiful couplet in this pastoral.

" No more the mounting larks, while Daphne sings,
 " *Shall list'ning in mid-air suspend their wings.*"

The image of the birds listening with their wings suspended in mid-air, is striking ; and I trust, new †.

Our critic having thus set out with denying our poet the merit of invention, he immediately makes a kind of digression in praise of Theocritus ; whom he very frequently styles the father and model of this enchanting kind of composition. Theocritus, he observes, derived many advantages from the climate in which he lived and wrote. " The poet," says he, " described what he saw and felt, and had no need to have recourse to those artificial assemblages of pleasing objects, which are not to be found in nature. The figs and honey which he assigns § as a reward to a victorious shepherd, were in themselves exquisite, and are therefore assigned with great propriety."

With due deference to our critic, however, these remarks do not appear to be well founded. The figs and honey of Sicily, however exquisite in themselves,

* The four lines which precede these, are incomparably fine ; but I know not whether they may not be considered as imitations of those beautiful pastoral images in Eve's speech to Adam ; which are thus recapitulated :

" But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
 " With charm of earliest birds," &c.

† The two lines however which immediately follow,

" No more the birds shall imitate her lays,
 " Or hush'd with wonder, hearken from the sprays,"

do but convey the same image, a little diversified.

§ Idyll. 1. v. 146.

were

were common to the inhabitants: and whoever is acquainted with the nature of the human appetites, will allow that things in general estimation, are not always valued because they are in themselves exquisite, but because they are scarce and rare. If they are common, they in some degree lose their value, and consequently any other reward, though less exquisite in itself, is most likely to become the object of desire. Any other premium than figs and honey, might therefore, in Sicily, have been assigned with greater propriety, and would have displayed more *invention* in the Sicilian bard.

A poet is not confined to his own country for images. He may range throughout the universe, and is not always, as Addison remarks, strictly bound by the laws of nature; much less restrained in his descriptions to the produce of particular climes. He may impregnate every soil with what seed best suits his purpose: he may make the spicy gales of Arabia, diffuse their fragrance over scentless and sterile wilds: he may bring the garden of the Hesperides from its native Africa, and make the golden fruit ripen in the most untoward clime. The following censure, therefore, will probably be thought too nice and captious. "Complaints," says he, "of immoderate heat, and wishes to be conveyed to cooling caverns, when uttered by the inhabitants of Greece, have a decorum and consistency which they totally lose in the character of a British shepherd."

That such causes of complaint will more frequently occur in the Grecian climate, is unquestionable; but is it necessary to make a complaint of this kind consistent, that every day should be a dog-day? The British shepherd might very consistently describe what he often felt, though not so frequently as the Grecian; and we have days in England, which might make even a Grecian faint.

He admits, however, that Mr. POPE was sensible of the importance of adapting images to the scene of action; which he instances in the translation of the following line:

" Audit Eurotas, jussitque ediscere lauros."

Here our poet, as the critic candidly observes, has dropped the *laurels* appropriated to Eurotas, as he is speaking of the river Thames; and has rendered it

" Thames heard the numbers as he flow'd along,
" And bade his *willows* learn the moving song *."

Our critic objects that " a mixture of British and Grecian ideas, may be justly deemed a blemish in the PASTORALS of POPE: and propriety," he adds, " is certain to be violated when he *couple*s Pætolus with the Thames," &c. How far such a violation is to be imputed to our poet, let the lines from the mouth of the shepherd speak for themselves.

" O'er golden sands let rich Pætolus flow,
" And trees weep amber on the banks of Po ;
" *Blest* Thames's *shores the brightest beauties yield* †,
" Feed here, my lambs, I'll seek no distant field."

What the critic means by *coupling* Pætolus with Thames, it is not easy to conjecture. They stand evidently *contradistinguished*: and surely the poet

* The author of the Elements of Criticism, objects to this descriptive personification, as destitute of resemblance to any thing real. " Admitting," says he, " that a river gently flowing, may be imagined a sensible being listening to a song; I cannot enter into the conceit of the river's ordering his laurels to learn the song: here all resemblance to any thing real is lost. This, however," he concludes, " is copied literally by one of our greatest poets."

It must indeed be confessed, that this fiction of the imagination, is, in the foregoing instance, used rather licentiously. But the critic is mistaken in saying, that our author has copied the original literally; since, as above observed, he has very judiciously changed the image, though he has given full scope to the fiction.

† The third line of this stanza, is very far from being smooth and harmonious. The genitive case hangs upon the tongue, and beside, occasions a very disagreeable hissing.

might

might draw a contrast from Greece, without being chargeable with a faulty *mixture* of British and Grecian ideas.

Ever partial to his favourite Sicilian, the critic prefers his imagery to Mr. POPE's in the following instance. "A shepherd," says he, "in Theocritus, wishes with much tenderness and elegance, both which must suffer in a literal translation,——

"Would I could become a murmuring bee, fly into your grotto, and be permitted to creep among the leaves of ivy and fern, that compose the chaplet which adorns your head." POPE, he observes, has thus altered this image :

"Oh! were I made by some transforming pow'r

"The captive bird that sings within thy bow'r!

"Then might my voice thy list'ning ears *employ*,

"And I those kisses he receives, enjoy."

"On three accounts," he concludes, "the foregoing image is preferable to the latter. For the pastoral wildness, delicacy, and uncommonness of the thought."

It is somewhat strange that the critic should applaud the Greek image for the uncommonness of the thought: since it is the perfection of pastoral images to be simple and natural. The beauty of this kind of poetry, arises from a natural ease of thought, and smoothness of verse. Now nothing can be more simple and natural, and at the same time more plaintive and pathetic, than the image of Mr. POPE; nor can any thing be expressed with greater beauty, and harmony of numbers †.

† Perhaps, however, in point of strict propriety, the word *employ*, in the third line, is not happily chosen. To *employ*, is to call forth the exertion of some *active* faculty. But the ear in listening is *passive*: and if the rhyme would have admitted, the verb *engage* should seem most proper.

A lover who wishes for a metamorphosis, for the sake of approaching more closely to his mistress, would undoubtedly wish to be transformed into something which might be the object of her caresses, and not into that from which she would shrink and retire.

The image in Theocritus is strained and unnatural : that in POPE is natural and fervid.

The pleasure which the shepherd in Theocritus proposes from his transformation, of creeping among the leaves of ivy and fern which compose his mistress's chaplet, is cold and insipid, compared to the animated and glowing wish of POPE's shepherd, who longs to supplant his feathered rival ; and dwell upon the enchanting lip of his favourite fair.

Impartial judgment must, nevertheless, in some degree, subscribe to the propriety of our critic's animadversion on the riddle of the Royal oak, in the first pastoral, which is in imitation of the Virgilian enigma ; and, as he well observes, favours of pun and puerile conceit.

“ Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil appears,
“ A wond'rous tree that sacred monarchs bears ?

“ With what propriety, the critic asks, could the tree whose shade protected the King, be said to be prolific of princes ?” Here however, there does not seem to be the impropriety which the critic apprehends. For the tree, by preserving the royal line, may, not improperly, be said to be prolific of Princes. After all, if idle riddles be a rural amusement all the world over, there can be no great objection to their being introduced in pastoral scenes : and if reason would not justify the use of them without example, our bard could shelter himself under no authority more unexceptionable than that of Virgil.

Among these pastorals, the most conspicuous is the Messiah, a sacred eclogue, in imitation of Virgil's Pollio.

Pollio *. This, the critic allows to be superior to the Pollio: and indeed, if Mr. POPE had given no other instance of the sublime, this alone would prove the sublimity of his genius †. How solemn and awful is the following invocation!

———“ O Thou my voice inspire
“ Who touch’d Ifaiah’s hallow’d lips with fire!”

In what a bold exalted strain, does the poet break forth

“ Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers;
“ Prepare the way! a God, a God appears:
“ A God, a God! the vocal hills reply,
“ The rocks proclaim th’ approaching Deity.
“ Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies!
“ Sink down, ye mountains, and, ye vallies, rise;
“ With heads declin’d, ye cedars, homage pay:
“ Be smooth, ye rocks; ye rapid floods, give way!
“ The Saviour comes! by antient bards foretold:
“ Hear him, ye deaf, and, all ye blind, behold.”

Upon the whole, it is not too much to say of these pastorals, that though they are *professedly* imitations of the ancients; yet there are few passages, which our poet has borrowed, without improving them; as the reader may judge by comparing the imitations with the originals, which are collected by the learned editor of his works §. Some instances

* It is but just to observe, that our critic has corrected a grammatical error in the *Messiah*, where our poet should have said, The swain—

“ Shall START amidst the thirst’ wild to hear
“ New falls of water murmuring in his ear.”

† Sir Richard Steele, in one of his letters to our author, speaking of his eclogue, says,——“ I have turned to every verse and chapter, and think you have preserved the sublime heavenly spirit throughout the whole.”

§ The present Bishop of Gloucester.

of imitation, however, seem to have escaped his recollection. The 84th line in particular, of the 4th pastoral †, on winter;

“ Thy name, thy honour, and thy praise shall live † !”

is an imitation, or rather indeed, a literal translation of the following line in Virgil——

“ *Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.*”

These pastorals were so much admired, that they brought our poet acquainted with the most eminent men of that time. Sir William Trumball, who was his zealous patron, first shewed them to Mr. Wycherley, who communicated them to Mr. Walsb, the author of many pieces both in prose and verse, and esteemed by Mr. Dryden, to have been one of the best critics of his age. He was so delighted with them, that, in his letter to Mr. Wycherley, he says —“ The author seems to have a particular genius

† This, which was our author's favourite pastoral, was written to the memory of Mrs. Tempest, a lady of an antient family in Yorkshire, and particularly admired by our author's friend Mr. Walsb; who having celebrated her in a pastoral elegy, desired his friend to do the same, as appears from one of his letters, where he says,—“ Your last eclogue being on the same subject with that of mine on Mrs. Tempest's death, I should take it very kindly in you to give it a little turn, as if it were to the memory of the same lady, if they were not written for some particular woman, whom you would make immortal. You may take occasion to shew the difference between poets mistresses, and other men's.” The death of this lady having happened on the night of the great storm in 1703, gave a propriety to his eclogue, which in its general turn alludes to it.

‡ It is observable, that the same line occurs, with little variation, towards the conclusion of the third canto of the Rape of the Lock—

“ So long my honour, name, and praise shall live.”

for

for this kind of poetry, and a judgment that far exceeds his years. He has taken very freely from the ancients, but what he has mixed of his own with theirs, is no way inferior to what he has taken from them. It is not flattery to say that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age. The preface is very learned and judicious; and the verses very tender and easy. I shall take it as a favour, if you will bring me acquainted with him."

Lord Lansdown likewise, about the same time, mentioning the youth of our poet, says (in a printed letter of the Character of Mr. Wycherley) that "if he goes on as he hath begun in the pastoral way, as Virgil first tried his strength, we may hope to see English poetry vie with the Roman."

These pastorals also passed through the hands of Dr. Garth, Lord Halifax, Lord Somers, Mr. Mainwaring and several others, who all gave our author the greatest encouragement.

Notwithstanding the early time of their production, our author himself esteemed these as the most correct in the versification, and musical in the numbers, of all his works; being conscious, as we may learn from his preface, how much their excellence depended on those niceties; in which he appears, even then, to have had uncommon skill: for in one of his letters to Mr. Walsh about this time, we find an enumeration of several niceties in versification, which perhaps have never been strictly observed in any English poem, except in these pastorals.

Our poet, indeed, seems never to have remitted his attention to the correctness of his versification; to which he was greatly encouraged by the advice of Mr. Walsh, who used to tell him there was one way left, of excelling: for that, though we had several great poets, yet we never had any that was correct; and he therefore recommended correctness to him, as his principal study and aim.

It must be confessed, however, that these pastorals did not escape the malice of criticism, at the time of their publication.

Many,

Many, who had not judgment to distinguish what is *rural* from what is *rustic*, imputed to them that they wanted that simplicity, which is the characteristic of pastoral poetry. To ridicule these objections, Mr. POPE privately sent an essay, which was published in a paper called the *Guardian*; and which contained an ironical comparison between his own pastorals, and those of Phillips. In this essay, our author went so far as to deny that his own had any claim to be called pastorals; adding humorously, that though they were by no means pastorals, yet they were something better.

He pleasantly observes, that neither Theocritus nor Virgil intended their poems for pastoral; "and in that respect," says he, "Phillips hath excelled both Theocritus and Virgil. Virgil, he continues, hath been thought guilty of too courtly a stile. Mr. POPE, he adds, hath fallen into the same error with Virgil. His clowns do not converse in all the simplicity proper to the country; his names are borrowed from Theocritus and Virgil, which are improper to the scenes of his pastorals. He introduces Daphnis, Alexis, and Thyrsis on British plains, as Virgil hath done before him on the Mantuan. Whereas Phillips, who hath the strictest regard to propriety, makes choice of names peculiar to the country, and more agreeable to a reader of delicacy; such as Hobbinol, Lobbin, Cuddy, and Colin Clout."

One would think that the irony in this passage, to say nothing of the rest, was too obvious to be mistaken, even by a Bœotian critic; nevertheless many were stupid enough to imagine it was a serious criticism by Steele, (who received it from an unknown hand.) Nay all at Button's, considered it as such, except Mr. Addison, who saw into the joke immediately; and the next time he met Mr. POPE, told him, into what a ridiculous situation he had put his friends; who had declared their dislike of having Phillips so extolled at the expence of another of the club: which is the language Steele had before held with POPE, when he first received the papers.

Some

Some who were weak enough to suppose this comparison serious, thought that it proceeded from a partiality to Mr. Phillips; for whom Sir Richard was supposed to have a personal kindness.

But the real occasion of that ludicrous piece of criticism, was Mr. Phillips's injustice to Mr. POPE. Whether occasioned by the latter's superior talents, or the former's over-heated zeal for whiggism, certain it is, that Mr. Phillips was always industrious to represent Mr. Pope as engaged in the intrigues of the tory ministry; for which he had no other grounds whatever, than the acquaintance and friendship Mr. POPE had with those eminent tory wits Swift and Prior, as also the ministers Oxford and Bolingbroke. But in their frequent meetings, politics never entered among the topics of conversation: And I am warranted to say from the best authority, that Mr. POPE never wrote a political paper in his life.

Mr. Phillips's mean injustice on this head, raised the indignation of some of Mr. POPE's friends, and particularly occasioned the SHEPHERD'S WEEK of Gay, in the proem of which, that *simplicity*, for which Mr. Phillips so much valued himself, in his pastorals, is pleasantly ridiculed; as is the naiveté of the incidents of these pastorals in the SHEPHERD'S WEEK itself. Yet, this is remarkable, that they who were not in the secret, mistook Gay's pastorals for a burlesque on Virgil's. How far this goes towards a vindication of Phillips's manner in the construction of his poem, let others judge.

Our bard, nevertheless, was, in general, peculiarly happy in cultivating, improving, and preserving, a friendship with writers of reputation, though he sometimes gave offence by the ingenuous candour and freedom, which he himself so strongly recommends in the following lines——

“ With mean complacence ne’er betray your
“ trust,

“ Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.”

He

He particularly disgusted Mr. Wycherley and Mr. Cromwell by this friendly liberty. He was scarce eighteen, when he was so high in the estimation of the former, that he engaged him to correct his poems, which he had published without success, in order to their passing through the press a second time with greater advantage. Mr. POPE undertook this nice office, which he executed with great judgment, and with an honest freedom. But the errors he corrected were so numerous, and his criticisms so just, that his old friend was hurt to see his insufficiency so exposed. Being aged and captious, he had not strength of understanding enough left to admire this noble exertion of one of the best offices of friendship, nor to receive it with suitable thanks and gratitude. Nevertheless, though his pride was so much offended that he, for some time, discontinued all correspondence with Mr. POPE, yet his judgment was so far corrected, that he desisted from his design of republishing his poems.

This weak and ungenerous return, Mr. POPE repented with a moderation and dignity far above his years. For when Mr. Cromwell gave him the first hint of Wycherley's chagrin, he answered thus——

“ I may derive this pleasure from it, that whereas I must otherwise have been a little uneasy to know my incapacity of returning his obligations, I may now, by bearing his frailties, exercise my gratitude and friendship more, than himself either is, or perhaps ever will be sensible of.

“ *Ille meos, primus qui sibi junxit, amores*
 “ *Abstulit, ille habeat secum, servetque sepulchro.*”

In the last visit which Mr. POPE made to him, the breach was openly intimated. “ He told me, (says Mr. POPE in a letter to Cromwell) he was going instantly out of town, and till his return was my humble servant.” Hereupon Mr. POPE finding that this journey into the country was not so instantaneous

taneous as was pretended, did not spare to return the compliment. "I beg you," says he, to the same friend, "do what you may with all truth, that is, assure Mr. Wycherley I have ever borne all respects and kindness imaginable to him. I don't know to this hour, what it is that has estranged him from me; but this I know, that he may for the future be more safely my friend, since no invitation of his shall ever make me so free with him."

By the mediation of a common friend, Mr. Wycherley was afterwards prevailed on to resume the correspondence, yet it never went farther than cool respect or bare ceremonial.

Mr. POPE, however, has been heard to say, that his old friend never did any thing unjust to him in his life. He used to complain indeed, that he was totally forgetful and somewhat peevish, which now and then occasioned little misunderstandings. But that nevertheless, they were upon good terms to the last, and that he went to see him on his death-bed &c. But, however sensible Mr. POPE was of the ill return which

§ Mr. POPE, in a letter to Mr. Blount, dated 21st January, 1715, relates a pleasant anecdote, which serves to characterize Mr. Wycherley. He had often told his acquaintance, that he would marry as soon as his life was despaired of. Accordingly, a few days before his death, he underwent the ceremony; and joined together those two sacraments, which, wise men say, should be the last we receive: "For, if you observe," says our author, "matrimony is placed after extreme unction in our catechism, as a kind of hint of the order of time in which they are to be taken. The old man then lay down, satisfied in the conscience of having by this one act, paid his just debts, obliged a woman, who (he was told) had merit, and shewn an heroic resentment of the ill-usage of his next heir. Some hundred pounds, which he had with the lady, discharged those debts; a jointure of four hundred a year, made her a recompence; and the nephew he left to comfort himself, as well as he could, after the miserable remains of a mortgaged estate. I saw our friend twice after this was done; less peevish in his sickness, than he used to be in his health; neither much afraid of dying, nor (which in him had been more likely) much ashamed of marrying. The evening before

which his old friend made to his sincerity, yet some time after Mr. Wycherley's death, his poems being republished by some mercenary editor in the year 1728, our author in the following year, printed several letters which passed between them, in vindication of Mr. Wycherley's fame, against some misconstructions prefixed to that edition: and throughout the whole of this misunderstanding, Mr. POPE, though a youth, displayed a most manifest superiority.

It is remarkable that our poet had afterwards the ill luck to disoblige Mr. Cromwell, by the same commendable frankness and sincerity.

In Mr. POPE's first letter to Mr. Gay, in the year 1712, he says—"Your Friend Mr. Cromwell has been silent all this year. I believe he has been displeased at some or other of my freedoms, which I very innocently take; and most with those I think most my friends." Now it appears by his letters to Mr. Cromwell, that our poet used to rally him on his turn for trifling and pedantic criticism. So he lost his two early friends, Cromwell and Wycherley, by his zeal to correct the bad poetry of the one, and the bad taste of the other.

The loss of these two captious friends, however, was amply compensated by the patronage and esteem of the most eminent men of the age, which his rising fame procured him. But the uncommon applause which he so deservedly obtained in his early years, did not make him remiss in his application,

before he expired, he called his young wife to the bed-side, and earnestly entreated her not to deny him one request, the last he should make. Upon her assurances of consenting to it, he told her, "My dear, it is only this, that you will never marry an old man again." I cannot help remarking, that sickness, which often destroys both wit and wisdom, yet seldom has power to remove that talent which we call humour: Mr. Wycherley shewed his, even in this last compliment; though I think his request a little hard, for why should he bar her from doubling her jointure on the same easy terms?"

or negligent in his composition. It served to animate, but not to intoxicate him.

Soon after his Pastorals, he published his Windsor-Forest, which was written at different times; the first part of it, which relates to the country, in the year 1704, at the same time with the pastorals, the latter not being added till the year 1713, in which it was published at the desire of Lord Lansdown, to whom it is addressed, as may be inferred from the motto *.

The author of the essay above-mentioned, opens his criticism on this piece, by saying that "Descriptive poetry was by no means the shining talent of POPE."

In this premature manner does the essayist censure our poet.—A hard censure, which even his own citations contradict.

He admits, for instance, that though, speaking of old FATHER THAMES, the trite and obvious insignia of a river god are attributed to him, yet there is one circumstance in his appearance highly picturesque, which is——

"His sea-green mantle waving with the wind."

He confesses likewise that the relievo upon his urn is finely imagined——

"The figur'd streams in waves of silver roll'd,
"And on their banks Augusta rose in gold."

Our critic is farther obliged to acknowledge, that the poet has with exquisite skill selected only those rivers as attendants on Thames, who are his subjects, his tributaries, or neighbours. The passage alluded to, is too beautiful to be omitted.

* *Non iniussa cano: Te nostrae, Vare, myricae,
Te Nemus omne canet; nec Phoebæ gratior ulla est,
Quam sibi quæ Vari præscripsit pagina nomen.*

- " First the fam'd authors of his ancient name,
 " The winding *Isis* and the fruitful *Tame* :
 " The *Kennet* swift, for silver eels renown'd ;
 " The *Lodden* flow, with verdant alders crown'd ;
 " *Cole*, whose dark streams his flow'ry islands
 " lave ;
 " And chalky *Wey*, that rolls a milky wave :
 " The blue transparent *Vandalis* appears ;
 " The gulphy *Lee* his sedgey tresses rears ;
 " The fullen *Mole*, that hides his diving flood ;
 " And silent *Darent*, stain'd with Danish blood."

The following specimen likewise of pure description may be added, to shew how little our bard was deficient in this talent.

- " In genial spring, beneath the quiv'ring shade,
 " Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
 " The patient fisher takes his silent stand,
 " Intent, his angle trembling in his hand :
 " With looks unmov'd, he *hopes* the scaly breed,
 " And eyes the dancing cork, and bending reed.
 " Our plenteous streams a various race supply,
 " The bright-ey'd perch, with fins of Tyrian die,
 " The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,
 " The yellow carp, in scales bedrop'd with gold :
 " Swift trouts, diversify'd with crimson stains,
 " And pykes, the tyrants of the wat'ry plains."

The other sports likewise of setting, shooting, and hunting are described with great beauty.

The following lines are finely descriptive, and at the same time pathetic. After having described a pheasant shot, he gives way to the following moving exclamation.

- " Ah ! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,
 " His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,
 " The

- * The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
- " His painted wings, and breast that flames with
" gold ?"

The following lines in the stag-chase, likewise are inimitably fine.

- " Th' impatient courser pants in ev'ry vein,
- " And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain * :
- " Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
- " And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost."
- " See the bold youth strain up the threat'ning
" steep,
- " Rush through the thickets, down the valleys
" sweep,
- " Hang o'er their coursers heads with eager speed,
- " And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed."

Many other, and more striking instances of Mr. POPE's talent for description, appear in the course of his works, and some will be taken notice of in their proper places.

It is certain that descriptive poetry can claim but a very subordinate rank in the scale of poetical excellence. As the learned editor of his works has observed, it is the office of a picturesque imagination to brighten and adorn good sense; so that to employ it only in description, is like children's delighting in a prism for the sake of its gaudy colours, which when frugally managed and skilfully disposed, might be

* The first four lines are translated from Statius.

- " *Stare adeo miserum est, pereunt vestigia mille*
- " *Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.*"

These lines, Mr. Dryden, in his preface to his translation of Fresnoy's Art of Painting, calls *wonderfully fine*; and says, " they wou'd cost him an hour, if he had the leisure, to translate them, there is so much beauty in the original;" which probably excited Mr. POPE to try his art with them.

made

made to represent and illustrate the noblest objects in nature.

Indeed our poet himself thought meanly of descriptive poetry, which he humorously observed was a composition as absurd as a feast made up of fauces: And in his epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, he speaks slightly of this sort of merit, where he says—

“ —Who could take offence

“ While pure *Description* held the place of Sense?”

Mr. POPE, however, has not failed in this piece to take every occasion of adorning good sense; and he sometimes, as our critic observes, introduces moral sentences and instructions in an oblique and direct manner, in places where one expects only painting and amusement. Thus we have virtue, as our poet himself remarks*, put upon us by surprize, and are pleased to find a thing where we should never have looked to meet with it.

Among other specimens of this distinguishing excellence, our critic has candidly selected the following, where, after speaking of hare-hunting, the poet subjoins—

“ Beasts, urg’d by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,

“ And learn of man each other *to* † undo.”

The manly indignation and generous freedom likewise with which our poet speaks of the ravages of the Norman kings, deserves to be admired. After describing the beauties of the forest, he thus breaks forth—

“ Not thus the land appear’d in ages past,

“ A dreary desert, and a gloomy waste,

* *Iliad*, b. 16. in the notes, ver. 465.

† *To* undo is unpoetical, and the *expletive* *To* makes the line halt.

“ To

†
form

" To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,
 " And kings more *furious* and *severe* † than they;
 " Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and
 " floods,
 " The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:
 " Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and
 " caves,
 " (For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves;)
 " What could be free, when lawless beasts
 " obey'd,
 " And ev'n the elements a Tyrant sway'd?"

This leads our poet to lament the miseries consequential of such devastation, which he bewails with amiable sensibility.

" In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain,
 " Soft show'rs distill'd, and suns grew warm in
 " vain;
 " The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,
 " And famish'd dies amidst his ripen'd fields."

Our poet closes this melancholy scene of desolation, with one of the finest pieces of description that can be imagined.

" The levell'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;
 " The hollow winds thro' naked temples roar;
 " Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;
 " O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;
 " The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
 " And savage howlings fill the sacred quires."

But the group of allegorical personages towards the conclusion, are confessed to be worthy the pencil of Rubens, or Julio Romano. The essayist candidly owns that Virgil, in describing the inhabitants of Hell's portal, has exhibited no images so lively and

† The last epithet here seems to weaken the force of the former.

distinct,

distinct, as the following living pictures painted by POPE, each of them with their proper insignia or attributes.

- “ — ENVY her own snakes shall feel,
 “ And PERSECUTION mourn her broken wheel :
 “ There FACTION roar, REBELLION bite her
 “ chain,
 “ And gasping furies thirst for blood in vain *.”

After the several instances of beautiful description, which our critic himself has applauded, together with others, which will be selected or referred to, the reader must be left to determine with what propriety it can be asserted that “ descriptive poetry was by no means the shining talent of POPE.” Surely his candour and penetration as a critic had been better displayed in observing “ that the studious cultivation of *descriptive poetry* was far below the poet’s comprehensive and sublime genius.”

Our critic is right, nevertheless, in remarking that there are *few* images introduced which are not applicable to any place whatever, and rather descriptive of rural beauty in general, than of the peculiar beauties of Windsor Forest. At the same time it should be remembered, that the forest in its state at that time, afforded but few images which could be peculiarly appropriated to it. No magnificent lakes or cascades, no elegant structures, or other beauties with which royal taste and magnificence have since embellished it, were then appropriated to it. But what beauties were peculiar to it, our poet has described in the in-

* The critic assures us he was informed by a person of no small rank, that Mr. Addison was inexpressibly chagrined at this noble conclusion of WINDSOR FOREST, both as a politician and as a poet. As a politician, because it so highly celebrated that treaty of peace which he deemed so pernicious to the liberties of Europe; and as a poet, because he was deeply conscious that his own Campaign, that gazette in rhyme, contained no strokes of such genuine and sublime poetry, as the conclusion before us.

troduction

roduction of the poem from verse nine to forty*, and with respect to the other images, though they are not peculiar to the forest alone, yet they are so admirably described, that they may be truly said to be excellent in their kind, and to prove that Mr. POPE possessed the talent of descriptive poetry in a very eminent degree.

Our poet's talents, however, ripening daily under the benign and fostering patronage of his noble and ingenious friends, he left scarce any species of poetical composition unattempted, and attempted none in which he did not excel.

His lyric pieces, which he composed soon after his Windsor Forest, have been deservedly admired: and his Ode on St. Cecilia's birth-day, in particular, has been esteemed the most artful as well as the most sublime of his lesser compositions.

The first stanza expresses the various tones and measures in music, and is almost a concert of itself. The second describes their power over the several passions in general. The third explains their use in inspiring the heroic passions in particular. The

* It is observable that the critic has censured the simile of the following lines.

“ Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,
 “ And part admit, and part exclude the day;
 “ As some coy nymph her lover's warm address
 “ Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.”

Bohours, says he, would rank this comparison among false thoughts and Italian conceits: the fallacy consists in giving design and artifice to the wood, as well as to the coquette; and in putting the light of the sun, and the warmth of a lover, on a level.

This is a fault, however, as he acknowledges, very uncommon in the writings of Mr. POPE: And perhaps the fault here imputed to the poet, is rather owing to a mistake in the critic. It is not the nymph's disposition of mind, to which the chequered scene is here compared, but to the *effects* produced by that disposition, viz. *Sun-bine* and *gloom*: which are *natural*, in the object of *description*, and *intellectual* in the objects of *comparison*.

fourth, fifth and sixth, their power over all nature, in the fable of Orpheus's expedition to hell. The seventh and last concludes in praise of music, and the advantages of the sacred above the profane.

The beginning of the second stanza, in the opinion of our critic, is a little flat, and by no means equal to the conclusion of it. But we might, on this occasion, very properly answer him by a remark of his own in another part, where he says, "If we consider that variety, which in all arts is necessary to keep up attention, we may perhaps affirm with truth that *inequality* makes a part of excellence: That something ought to be thrown into shades, in order to make the lights more striking." It may be added, that this inequality or *flatness*, if our critic chooses to call it so, is in the instance before us rather a beauty than a blemish: For as the stanza opens with describing the power of music in conferring tranquillity and equanimity, it is rather a proof of our poet's skill in adapting his numbers to the sentiment, and it would have been very injudicious to have risen too high in the opening, more especially as the ideas which follow, afford him such an opportunity of swelling into a beautiful climax.—But let the reader judge for himself.

- " By Music, minds an *equal temper* know,
- " Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.
- " If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,
- " Music her soft, assuasive voice applies ;
- " Or, when the soul is press'd with cares,
- " Exalts her in enliv'ning airs.
- " Warriors she fires with animated sounds ;
- " Pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds :
- " Melancholy lifts her head,
- " Morpheus rouses from his bed,
- " Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,
- " Lift'ning Envy drops her snakes ;
- " Intestine war no more our Passions wage,
- " And giddy Factions hear away their rage."

Nothing

Nothing can be more artfully managed than this stanza, nor can any thing be more striking and poetical than the beautiful personifications here introduced.

To talk of the flatness in the beginning of this stanza, is as if a learner in the mathematics should censure the dryness of a theorem, because he does not immediately perceive that fertility and abundance, which spring up from it on profound cultivation. Though our poet be as sublime as Pindar, yet he is infinitely more regular and philosophic: and it was here his purpose to prove that the legitimate use of music is to temper the passions, in support of reason. In the two first lines therefore, this useful proposition is delivered, as such always should be, whether in poetry or prose, with great simplicity. But the proof of it, in the various instances of its truth, he delivers in all the sublime of poetic thought and expression.

But our critic's censure of the following numbers, which conclude the fifth stanza, appears to be better founded.

“ Thus song could prevail

“ O'er death, and o'er hell,

“ A conquest how hard and how glorious!

“ Tho' fate had fast bound her

“ With Styx nine times round her,

“ Yet music and love were victorious.”

Though in this place a song of triumph must be allowed to be well placed; by ill luck, nevertheless, the measure has been employed in drinking-songs, which added to the story, which has been as commonly the subject of those songs, throws an air of ridicule on what the poet intended to be serious; and makes these numbers, as the critic observes, of so burlesque and ridiculous a kind, that one is concerned to find them in a serious ode, and in an ode of a writer eminently skilled, in general, in accommodating his sounds to his sentiments.

He might have extended his censure likewise to the following lines, where the poet describes the grief and despair of the lover, who lost his Eurydice by looking back.

- " Now under hanging mountains,
- " Beside the fall of fountains,
- " Or where Hebrus wanders,
- " Rolling in Maeanders,
- " All alone,
- " Unheard, unknown,
- " He makes his moan ;
- " And calls her ghost,
- " For ever, ever, ever lost!
- " Now with Furies surrounded,
- " Despairing, confounded,
- " He trembles, he glows,
- " Amidst Rhodope's snows."

A reader of nice ear, will readily perceive that the measure, in these lines, is much too sprightly for the sentiment. The too frequent returns of rhyme, are highly improper for any severe or serious passion: the difference between the subject and the modulation is very sensibly felt *.

The essayist, however, candidly admits that the supplicating song at the beginning of the fifth stanza is highly pathetic and poetical.

- " By the streams that ever flow,
- " By the fragrant winds that blow
- " O'er the Elysian flow'rs ;
- " By those happy souls who dwell
- " In yellow meads of Asphodel,
- " Or Amaranthine bow'rs ;
- " By the heroes armed shades,
- " Glitt'ring through the gloomy glades ;
- " By the youths that dy'd for love,
- " Wand'ring in the myrtle grove,

* See *Elements of Criticism*.

" Restore, restore Eurydice to life:

" Oh take the husband, or return the wife!"

These images he observes are picturesque and appropriated, and the notes are such as might—

" Draw iron tears *from* Pluto's cheek,

" And make hell grant what love *did* seek †."

Our bard, likewise, composed two choruses in the lyric strain, at the desire of the Duke of Buckingham, to embellish a very bad play which his grace had altered from Shakespeare. They had, as the editor observes, the usual effects of ill adjusted ornaments, only serving to make the meanness of the subject more conspicuous. Nevertheless, they were set to music many years afterwards by the famous Bononcini, and performed at Buckingham-house.

These lyric pieces alone, are sufficient to prove Mr. POPE's abilities for this species of poetry, and it is to be lamented that he did not prosecute his purpose of executing some plans of this nature, which he had chalked out. But the characters of the managers of the play houses at that time, determined him, as he said, to lay aside all thoughts of that kind. Other considerations likewise probably co-operated to render him averse from having any thing to do with the stage. He remembered that *Pliny*, or some other antient author, had delivered down to us this extra-

† These lines, which the critic has taken from *Milton's Il Penseroso*, are not accurately transcribed. Milton has said more properly, "*down* Pluto's cheek."

It may be observed, however, that the auxiliary verb *did*, in the second line, is extremely inelegant and unpoetical.

I am very far, however, from the presumption of making this remark with the petulant design of carping at the writings of this immortal bard. But though the splendid beauties may more than atone for the blemishes and inequalities of a great genius, yet they ought not to pass unnoticed, lest the reverence which is paid to their authority, should mislead the public taste and judgment, and incline the hasty and injudicious, not only to admire, but to imitate imperfections.

ordinary particular, concerning the construction of *Pompey's* magnificent theatre; that the seats of it were so contrived, as to serve at the same time for steps to the entrance of the Temple of *Venus*, which he had joined to his theatre. The moral poet could not but speculate on a circumstance, where the *λογος* and the *μυθος* of the story were as closely united as the two edifices.

Among other beauties in the lyric pieces under consideration, there is something very bold and masterly in the following lines, where, describing the effects of the arts in Britain, he says —

“ See arts her savage sons controul,
 “ And Athens rising near the pole!
 “ Till some new Tyrant lifts his purple hand,
 “ And civil madness tears them from the land.”

In the two last lines, there is a happy and noble combination of imagery and sentiment.

But the next chorus affords a beauty of the softer kind, where the poet thus feelingly describes the delights of connubial love.

“ Oh source of ev’ry social tie,
 “ United with, and mutual joy!
 “ What various joys on one attend,
 “ As son, as father, brother, husband, friend?
 “ Whether his hoary fire he spies,
 “ While thousand grateful thoughts arise;
 “ Or meets his spouse’s fonder eye;
 “ Or views his smiling progeny;
 “ What tender passions take their turns,
 “ What home-felt raptures move?
 “ His heart now melts, now leaps, now burns,
 “ With rev’rence, hope, and love.”

A mind endued with the least sensibility, cannot fail of being affected by the delicacy and tenderness of these sentiments, as well as charmed by the force
 and

and propriety of the epithets, and the elegance and harmony of the numbers.

The next piece which falls under consideration, is the *Essay on Criticism*, which, extraordinary as it may seem, was written before our poet had attained his twentieth year; and published within two years afterwards, being as short a time as he ever suffered any thing to lie by him.

It had not probably been published so soon, but for the importunity of his old friend Sir William Trumball, to whom he sent a copy of it, and who was so charmed with it, that, in a letter which he addressed to him in return, he concludes thus,—

“All I can add is, that if your excess of modesty
“should hinder you from publishing this essay, I
“shall only be sorry I have no more credit with you,
“to persuade you to oblige the public, and in particular, Dear Sir, &c.

This poem, the writer of the essay candidly allows to be a master-piece of its kind, and that notwithstanding the partial commendation of Mr. Addison, who remarks that——“the observations follow one
“another, like those of Horace’s *Art of poetry**,
“without that methodical regularity, which would
“have been necessary in a prose writer,” yet it is evident that the plan is regular, and the conduct of it masterly.

Indeed, it is difficult, as our poet’s learned friend and commentator observes, to conceive any prerogative in verse, to dispense with method and regularity. Besides, in truth, our poet laid the plan, and digested all the matter in prose; and then, as he has been heard to say, he turned it into verse with great rapidity.

The general order and design of this work is fully delineated in the admirable commentary subjoined to it. But it would not be consistent with the professed

* That Horace attended to method in his *Art of Poetry*, has been shewn by a learned critic. See Mr. Hurd’s comment on the Epistle to the Pisos.

plan of this history, should I omit to point out its most distinguished beauties and defects, which cannot be done, without giving a short analysis of the poet's chain of argument: I cannot help thinking it a capital objection to the *essay* above-mentioned on Mr. POPE's *writings*, &c. that the essayist frequently only selects detached passages, as the foundation of his encomium or censure, without attempting to connect the sense. Unless we recollect the writer's general scope of reasoning, we cannot always fully relish the beauties of particular parts, more especially in Mr. POPE, who has the particular skill to employ poetical ornaments. Add to this, that when parts are thus taken detached, we may sometimes impute faults to the writer, which are so only from the partial view we have given of his work*.

The poem consists of one book, which is divided into three principal parts, or members. The first of them giving rules for the study of the art of criticism; the second exposing the causes of wrong judgment; and the third, marking out the morals of the critic.

Though this piece is intitled simply an *Essay on Criticism*, yet it contains several precepts, equally relative to the good writing, as to the true judging of a poem; which is so far from violating the unity of the subject, that it preserves and compleats it.

The poet having in the opening, shewn the use and seasonableness of the subject, he proceeds to inquire into the proper qualities of a true critic.

" 'Tis with our *judgments* as our watches, none
" Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

* To this effect, says our Poet, in the following lines:

" The critic eye, that microscope of wit,
" Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit:
" How parts relate to parts, or they to whole,
" The body's harmony, the beaming soul,
" Are things which Kuster, Burman, Wasse shall see,
" When man's whole frame is obvious to a *flea*."

" In

" In Poets, as true *genius* is but rare,
 " True *taste* as seldom is the Critic's share;
 " Both must alike from Heav'n derive their light,
 " 'These born to *judge*, as well as those to write."

The reasoning in these lines, as the learned commentator observes, is conclusive; and the similitude extremely just.

It may be necessary, however, to consider this passage respecting the human faculties, somewhat more critically; as it will be of use hereafter, in the attempt to ascertain the nature and extent of our author's genius.

It has been said that "*judgment*, when it goes alone, is generally regulated, or at least much influenced, by custom, fashion or habit; and never certain and constant, but when founded upon TASTE; which is the same in the *critic*, as GENIUS in the *poet*. That, in fact, genius and taste are but one and the same faculty differently exerting itself under different names, in the two professions of poetry and criticism: for that the art of poetry consists in selecting out of all those images which present themselves to the fancy, such of them as are truly beautiful: And the art of criticism in discerning, and fully relishing, what it finds so selected."

Though it may be allowed, that judgment is never certain, but when ripened into taste: nevertheless we must be cautious how we fall into an error, which has been adopted by many writers, who have considered *judgment* and *taste* as things totally distinct: for they appear to be the same faculty, and to differ only in the degree and extent of their application. *Taste* is nothing but *judgment* matured and refined. The faculty of judgment, is born with us; taste is, in a great measure, acquired. Judgment, is the faculty of comparing and separating our ideas: taste, is the same faculty of comparison improved, and applied to works of imagination and elegance.

The man of taste seems at one glance, by a kind of intuition, to discern what is beautiful and elegant; and this has misled many to imagine that taste is a faculty distinct from judgment. But, in truth, we cannot discover what is beautiful, but by comparison: and to compare, as has been said, is the office of judgment. Taste, therefore, is the result of repeated, tho' perhaps imperceptible operations of the judgment, by which, we at length acquire that quick discernment of, and habitual relish for, the beautiful.

The excellence of taste, depends on an extensive knowledge in the subjects of the fine arts; and on that habit of comparison, which alone can enable us to discern and *relish* what is truly beautiful. For instance, should a man of good natural judgment who had never seen a picture, behold two portraits of the human figure, daubed upon a sign, of which the one was manifestly a better imitation of nature than the other, he would not fail to be delighted with that which had the preference, and to pronounce it beautiful. But should he afterward become conversant with the works of a *Vandyke* or a *Reynolds*, he would discover the uncertainty of his former judgment, and what pleased him before as beautiful, he would then despise as defective. In this sense, we may be allowed to say, that judgment in the fine arts is never certain, but when matured and refined to taste.

At the same time it may be doubted, whether *genius* and *taste* can be strictly considered as the same faculty, differently exerting itself under different names. Genius, as the derivative sense of the word implies, denotes the faculty of inventing, or of forming new associations of ideas; but the business of *selecting* such images as are truly beautiful, seems to be the province of taste; which, as the term imports, is the faculty of discerning, or in its etymological sense, of *feeling* what is beautiful.

It is as usual, and perhaps as proper, to say a *writer* of taste, as a *critic* of taste: and it seems
easy

easy to conceive a writer of *genius*, that is, of strong creative powers, without *taste* to *select* such images as are truly beautiful, from the group which throng before him. This defect is sometimes, perhaps oftener, observable in writers of the greatest genius; and seems to arise from too quick a sensibility, which causes the novelty of various images, to make such a powerful impression on their minds, as to prevent the timely interposition of judgment, to dissipate the charm which misleads them in their choice. But though taste is spoiled by too exquisite a sensibility, yet without a certain degree of it, neither taste nor genius can exist. They spring from the same common stock; sensibility is the root of both: and though both may be improved and refined by exercise, yet the seeds of each are sown by nature.

The poet himself, indeed, seems to have had the distinctions in view which I would endeavour to point out. He says;

- “ Authors are partial to their *wit*, 'tis true,
 “ But are not Critics to their *judgment* too?
 “ Yet if we look more closely, we shall find
 “ Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind:
 “ Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light;
 “ The lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn
 “ right.”

Taking these lines, and those before quoted together, it should seem from the context, that the poet uses judgment and taste, as two words denoting degrees of the same faculty, and that he considers genius as something distinct from both.

Among the causes which prevent the due culture of the seeds of judgment, our Author reckons false reasoning, false wit, and false politeness: on which he farther expatiates in the second part. Against false wit, which is the most frequent cause of a perversion of judgment, he is particularly severe.

“ Some

- " Some have at first for Wits, then Poets past,
 " Turn'd Critics next, and prov'd plains fools at
 " last.
 " Some neither can for Wits nor Critics pass,
 " As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.
 " Those half-learn'd wiflings, num'rous in our
 " isle,
 " As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;
 " Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,
 " Their generation's so equivocal."

Nothing can be more keen and sarcastic than these lines, in which the images are most happily chosen to heighten the satire.

He next proceeds to deliver the precepts of criticism, recommending it to the critic in the first place to examine his own strength: nature he observes has set fixed limits to the human faculties——The lines by which he expresses this sentiment are incomparable.

- " Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,
 " And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit.
 " As on the land while here the ocean gains,
 " In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;
 " Thus in the soul while *memory* prevails,
 " The solid pow'r of *understanding* fails;
 " Where beams of warm *imagination* play,
 " The memory's soft figures melt away.
 " One science only will one genius fit;
 " So vast is art, so narrow human wit."

The poetry as well as the philosophy of this passage, can scarcely be too much admired. How chaste and elegant, yet how strong and lively, is the imagery by which he illustrates the tendencies of the different faculties! There is peculiar beauty in representing the *beams* of warm imagination, as *melting* away the *soft* figures of memory. Every epithet is
 so

so happily adapted, that it is impossible to change a word, without doing prejudice to the image.

Having shewn that *nature* is the proper foundation on which to establish criticism, he points out the aids which may be borrowed from *art*. He intimates that the rules of art were not invented by the fancy, but discovered in the book of nature: and are still nature, though methodized. This he explains by a happy illustration, wherein he gives a just definition of liberty; from whence we may perceive how essentially it differs from that *licentiousness*, which too often usurps its name and character.

“ Nature, like Liberty, is but restrain’d

“ By the same Laws which first herself ordain’d.”

These rules of art, he observes, the critics borrowed from the antient poets, who drew them immediately from nature.

“ Just precepts thus from great examples giv’n,

“ She drew from them, what they deriv’d from

“ Heav’n.

“ The gen’rous Critic fann’d the Poet’s fire,

“ And taught the world with Reason to admire.

“ Then Criticism the Muse’s handmaid prov’d,

“ To dress her charms, and make her more be-
“ lov’d :

“ But following wits from that intention stray’d,

“ Who could not win the mistress, woo’d the
“ maid ;

“ Against the Poets their own arms they turn’d,

“ Sure to hate most the men from whom they
“ learn’d.

“ So modern ‘Pothecaries, taught the art

“ By Doctors’ bills to play the Doctor’s part,

“ Bold in the practice of mistaken rules,

“ Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.”

There is a great deal of sprightly wit and keen raillery in this passage, in which the poet has drawn
his

his observations from Quintilian ; but has skilfully enlivened them, as he seldom fails to do any trite or borrowed sentiments, with all the graces of a splendid imagination.

Our author next observes, that there are graces beyond the reach of precept.

- “ If, where the rules not far enough extend,
 “ (Since rules are made but to promote their end)
 “ Some lucky licence answers to the full
 “ Th’ intent propos’d, that Licence is a rule.
 “ Thus Pegafus, a nearer way to take,
 “ May boldly deviate from the common track.
 “ From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
 “ And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.
 “ Which without passing thro’ the judgment,
 “ gains
 “ The heart, and all its end at once attains.”

The essayist, before mentioned, has censured the foregoing illustration ; where, as he observes, there is evidently a blameable mixture of metaphors, the attributes of the horse and the writer being confounded. The former, says he, may be justly said “ to take a nearer way,” and to “ deviate from a track ;” “ but how can a horse snatch a grace,” or “ gain a heart ?”

To this however, it may be answered, that *Pegafus* is here used only as a generic name for *poetry*. And the poet evidently intended to have wrote—*for* Pegafus.—But by saying—*thus* Pegafus—he makes a *similitude* of what he only designed for the *explanation of a precept*.

Our poet adds, that if we must offend against the precept, we ought never to transgress the end : and that we should, at least, have the precedent of the antients to justify us——

- “ Let it be seldom, and compell’d by need ;
 “ And have, at least, their PRECEDENT to plead.”

This

This must be considered as a precept of *prudence* only, and to avoid censure: for surely it is debasing genius to shackle it with the fetters of PRECEDENT. Irregular strokes, *audacter sumpta*, will always be justified by the natural effects they produce, though there should be no precedent to plead for them. If these effects will not vindicate them, the dispensing power of the antients will plead in vain.

It is admirably observed by a writer of true original genius *, that we might expect to learn the principles of the arts from the artists themselves; but, says he, they have been too much occupied in the practice, and have sought the rules of the arts in the wrong place; they have sought it among poems, pictures, &c.—“ But,” he continues, “ art can never give the rules that make an art. This is, I believe, the reason why artists in general, and poets principally, have been confined within so narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another, than of nature; and this with so faithful an uniformity, and to so remote an antiquity, that it is hard to say who gave the first model. Critics follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of any thing, whilst I measure it by no other standard than itself. The true standard of the arts is in every man’s power, and an easy observation of the most common, sometimes of the meanest things in nature, will give the truest lights, where the greatest sagacity and industry, that flights such observation, must leave us in the dark, or what is worse, amuse and mislead us by false lights.”

Our poet, however, the better to enforce the authority of the antients, endeavours to vindicate them from the presumptuous censure of modern critics.

* The author of a Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.

" I know there are, to whose presumptuous
 " thoughts
 " Those freer beauties, ev'n in them, seem faults.
 " Some figures monstrous and mis-shap'd appear,
 " Consider'd singly, or beheld too near,
 " Which, but proportion'd to their light, or
 " place,
 " Due distance reconciles to form and grace."

This just and striking metaphor, is nicely appropriated to illustrate the sentiment; and is, perhaps, the best apology that can be offered for the seemingly bold deviations of the antients.

Transported with their beauties, he breaks out into a kind of rapturous exclamation, on contemplating the rare felicity of those few who still stand green with bays; and turns towards their manes, in the following most admirable apostrophe:

" Hail, Bards triumphant! born in happier days;
 " Immortal heirs of universal praise!
 " Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
 " As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow:
 " Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
 " And worlds applaud that must not yet be
 " found!
 " O may some spark of your celestial fire,
 " The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,
 " (That on weak wings, from far, pursues your
 " flights;
 " Glows while he reads, but trembles as he
 " writes)
 " To teach vain Wits a science little known,
 " To admire superior sense, and doubt their own!"

In these beautiful lines, the poet appears, as the commentator strongly expresses it, " with the *humility* of a Suppliant at the shrine of Immortals, " and the *sublimity* of a Poet participating of their " fire." There is not, I believe, a stronger indication

The rules for perfecting the art of criticism, having been set forth in the first part, the causes tending to impede its perfection are next explained. Of these the first—

"Make use of ev'ry friend—and ev'ry foe."

Superficial learning is the next cause which our author exposes. He advises the critic to

At the same time, he points out the labours and difficulties attending the progress towards science, which he aptly illustrates in the following lines.

“Th’

- " Th' eternal snows appear already past,
 " And the first clouds and mountains seem the
 " last:
 " But, those attain'd, we tremble to survey
 " The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,
 " Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring
 " eyes,
 " Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise !"

The *Essayist* does not seem inclined to applaud this celebrated illustration. The images, he observes, are too general and indistinct : but if the mind, as it enlarges itself in the pursuit of learning, be indeed in the state of a wearied traveller, when entered on the passage of the Alps (as it is surely) could there be an apter similitude ? And if, in the description of this journey, the *images are too general and indistinct*, it is the fault of that barren and extensive region, and not of the poet, who must describe what he finds or conceives. But the *Essayist* would have him an INVENTOR at the expence of every other faculty of the poet or the man.

In truth, however, though the simile is, on the whole, very fine and apposite, yet it seems to be spun out to a languid iteration of idea. " The " Alps rising on Alps," is but an echo of hills peep-
 " ing o'er hills ;" and there is too much in these lines of what the French call *Verbiage* : a word which I would not use, but that I do not know one in our own language so expressive of my meaning.

Among other causes which occasion wrong judgment, he reckons a *narrow capacity* ; which may be exposed in judging either of the *matter*, or the *manner*, of the work. Of the matter, in judging by parts ; or in preferring one favourite part, to a disregard of all the rest. Of the manner, in confining the attention only to *conceit*, *language* or *numbers*.

The

The poet first exposes those phlegmatic critics, who, not entering into the spirit of their author, take a partial survey, and are curious to detect trivial faults.

“ A perfect Judge will read each work of Wit
 “ With the same spirit that its author writ :
 “ Survey the WHOLE, nor seek slight faults to
 “ find

Where nature moves, and rapture warms the
 “ mind ;

“ Nor lose for that malignant dull delight,
 “ The gen’rous pleasure to be charm’d with wit.

A critic, whose capacity is not sufficiently comprehensive to take in the whole, can never feel the lively impressions with which a warm imagination is smitten on a general survey of nature, and must consequently confine his view to detached parts, which, to his short sight, will frequently appear irregular. This, however, the poet himself admirably illustrates.

“ In Wit, as Nature, what affects our hearts
 “ Is not th’ exactness of peculiar parts ;
 “ ’Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
 “ But the joint force and full result of all.
 “ Thus when we view some well-proportion’d
 “ dome,
 “ (The world’s just wonder, and ev’n thine,
 “ O Rome !)
 “ No single parts unequally surprize,
 “ All comes united to th’ admiring eyes ;
 “ No monstrous height, or breadth, or length
 “ appear ;
 “ The Whole at once is bold, and regular.”

There is a most happy propriety in this illustration, and perhaps it will not be too much to say, that there is even a sublimity in it, which excites our admiration

admiration of the noble structure which the poet describes.

The folly of making the whole subservient to a part, is pleasantly ridiculed by the tale of *La Mancha*; which is told with incomparable humour, and is a strong proof of our author's various merit, which enabled him, with that happy facility, to slide imperceptibly from the gravity of the didactic, to the gaiety of the facetious narrative.

The poet next exposes the limited talents of those who confine their attention to conceit and wit, which he ridicules by a simile drawn from a sister art.

" Poets, like painters, thus, unskill'd to trace
 " The naked nature and the living grace,
 " With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part,
 " And hide with ornaments their want of art."

Having ridiculed the *false*, he describes the nature of the *true* species of wit.

" True Wit is Nature to advantage dress'd."

The dress which is most becoming, the poet points out in the following beautiful illustration.

" As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
 " So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit."

This is that delightful simplicity, which adds grace and propriety to all the works of the fine arts: and the poet has shewn great skill in the conduct of these similes, by which the nature, both of true and false wit, are explained by images drawn from the same art.

An extraordinary attention to language falls next under our author's censure; and the absurdity of it is finely exemplified in an admirable simile.

" False

- " False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
 " Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place ;
 " The face of Nature we no more survey,
 " All glares alike, without distinction gay."

Imagination cannot conceive any thing more happily appropriated than this simile, to ridicule the fantastic glare of false eloquence.

He then exposes the folly of too great a fondness for the harmony of numbers ; ridiculing those who only haunt *Parnassus*, to please their ear : and next gives rules for true harmony, of which the chief is, that the sound should be an echo to the sense ; which precept he illustrates by several examples of smoothness, roughness, slowness, and rapidity.

I cannot help thinking, that upon the whole, there is great merit in the following exemplifications ; though I am free to confess, that there is great justice likewise in some of the animadversions, made by the ingenious author of the *Rambler* ; though others are perhaps rather nice and fastidious.

- " Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
 " And the smooth stream in smoother numbers
 " flows ;
 " But when loud surges lash the sounding shoar,
 " The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent
 " roar :
 " When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to
 " throw,
 " The line too labours, and the words move slow :
 " Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 " Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along
 " the main."

" The verse," this author observes, " intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must surely be confessed not much to excel in *softness* and *volubility* ; and the smooth stream runs with " a perpetual clash of jarring consonants."

But

But notwithstanding the authority of this criticism, a man may, with good reason, perhaps, be supposed to have a very singular ear who does not discover a peculiar softness, in the first verse ; and as to volubility, that might indeed have been necessary, had the poet been describing the rushing of a whirlwind ; but why it should be essential in representing the *gently* blowing breeze, is difficult to conceive. *Gentle* and *voluble* are opposite terms, and to have represented the one by the other, would have been a very preposterous attempt. At the same time it must be admitted, that the line intended to describe the *smooth stream*, though there is nothing jarring in it, yet nevertheless, when considered as an example of smoothness, it abounds too much with consonants to render the exemplification striking.

“ The noise and turbulence of the torrent,” this writer continues, “ is indeed distinctly imagined ; for,” he adds, “ it requires very little skill to make our language rough. “ But,” he proceeds, “ in the lines which mention the effort of Ajax, there “ is no particular heaviness or delay.”

This last censure, however, seems to be ill founded. It is scarce possible to read these lines with any degree of fluency and volubility.

Nothing can be more tardy, nor move with greater prosaic drag, than these lines, which abound with sluggish monosyllables ; which are particularly adapted to express the tardy motion of a laborious effort *.

“ The swiftness of Camilla,” the writer adds, “ is rather contrasted than exemplified. Why the verse “ should be lengthened to express speed, will not “ easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that “ purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were “ pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal “ only to one long ; they therefore naturally exhibit “ the art of passing through a long space in a short

* Monosyllables likewise, as Mr. POPE some where observes, may be happily employed to express *melancholy*.

"time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the
 "midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the
 "word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow
 "which our language affords, cannot much accele-
 "rate its motion."

These remarks, it must be allowed, are not with-
 out propriety. But though the Alexandrine is in this
 place rendered faulty by the choice of words, which
 cannot be pronounced with rapidity, yet if it was
 composed of epithets which would run with fluency
 the Alexandrine would be the measure best calculated
 to exemplify swiftness; because it would then most
 naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long
 space in a short time. It may, on this occasion, be
 worth remarking too, that though *unbending* be in-
 deed sluggish, and ill-adapted, by its *sound*, to ex-
 emplify swiftness; yet, if we attend to the *sense*, it
 will appear, that nothing could be more happily
 chosen. It is impossible to convey a higher idea of
 the rapidity of Camilla's motion, than by describing
 her to have flown so fast, that the corn did not even
 bend to the impression she made in her flight. The
 same happiness of expression is likewise observable
 in the close of the line, where she is represented
skimming along the main.

But one of the best exemplifications of celerity, is
 to be found in the celebrated line of the *Odyssey*.

"ΑΥΤΙΣ ΕΠΕΙΤΑ ΠΕΘΟΝΔΕ ΚΥΛΙΝΔΕΤΟΛΑΑΣ ΑΝΑΙΔΗΣ."

Yet, after all, perhaps, the adapting the sound
 of the words to the sense, is, in most cases, more the
 effect of chance, than art; nay, I know not whe-
 ther, in describing boisterous images especially, such
 adaption is not rather a matter of necessity, than
 design: for I believe it would be difficult to express
 such images in words, which are not rough and
 sonorous. In short, the skill, in the several instances
 of adapting the sound to the sense, seems to lie
 rather in the arrangement, than in the choice of the
 words.

The

The last cause which the poet enumerates, as tending to obstruct the judgment, is *Partiality*; which he considers in its various branches, as it begets prejudices against particular things or persons: First, as it induces critics to prefer foreign writers, before our own; the antients, before the moderns——

“ And force that sun but on a part to shine,
 “ Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,
 “ But ripens spirits in cold northern climes.”

These lines are very poetical, and convey a just censure of a failing, to which not only the unlearned, to whom the poet particularly applies them, but even the learned, are too apt to incline. When men have bestowed a great deal of time and attention to make themselves acquainted with classic lore, they frequently set too high a value on the acquisition. They are often partial to the merit of the antients, while they disregard excellence among the moderns. Perhaps self-love may induce them, to prefer what has cost them most pains to acquire.

Our author next proceeds to expose the instances of partiality in the learned, such as singularity and novelty, and in the last place expresses his indignation against *party rage* and *envy*, for which he had a natural abhorrence. The comparison between envied merit, and the sun eclipsed, is most happily conceived, and the last lines are even sublime.

“ Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue ;
 “ But like a shadow, proves the Substance true ;
 “ For envy’d Wit, like Sol eclips’d, makes known
 “ Th’ opposing body’s grossness, not its own.
 “ When first that sun too pow’rful beams dis-
 “ plays,
 “ It draws up vapours which obscure its rays ;
 “ But ev’n those clouds at last adorn its way,
 “ Reflect new glories, and augment the day.”

Having

Having exposed those detestable principles, our author next, with an amiable liberality of mind, warns the true critic to be the first to befriend true merit. As our language, he observes, is failing and changeable, the date of modern fame is in its nature short. This he illustrates by a comparison, which is most incomparably fine.

“ So when the faithful pencil has design’d
 “ Some bright idea of the master’s mind,
 “ Where a new world leaps out at his command,
 “ And ready Nature waits upon his hand :
 “ When the ripe colours soften and unite,
 “ And sweetly melt into just shade and light ;
 “ When mellowing years their full perfection give,
 “ And each bold figure just begins to live,
 “ The treach’rous colours the fair art betray,
 “ And all the bright creation fades away !”

Nothing, as the essayist candidly admits, was ever so happily expressed on the art of painting : a subject on which POPE always speaks *con amore*, being himself, as will be shown, a practitioner, in that pleasing art.

But if, says our author, any dregs of the sour critical humour still remain, let them be vented against *obscenity* and *impiety*. Here he takes occasion to brand the *fat age of pleasure*—

“ When Love was all an easy monarch’s care.”

There is great merit in the following beautiful lines, in which the poet at once censures the prurient taste of the dramatic writers of those days, and the indelicacy of the fair sex, to whom that taste had ceased to be offensive.

“ The Fair fate panting at a Courtier’s play,
 “ And not a Mask went unimprov’d away :
 “ The modest fan was lifted up no more,
 “ And Virgins smil’d at what they blush’d before.”

There are a sweetness and melody in these lines, which give the elegance and delicacy of the sentiment, a peculiar relish.

In the *third* part, our author considers the *Morals* of the critic; under which are comprehended candour, modesty, and good breeding.

Without the first essential requisite, he shews that all other talents are insufficient.——

“ ’Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning,
“ join;
“ In all you speak, let truth and candour shine.”

The truth likewise must be communicated with modesty——

“ Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;
“ And speak, *though sure*, with seeming diffi-
“ dence.”

To make the truth palatable, it must likewise be offered with good breeding:

“ Without Good-Breeding, truth is disapprov’d,
“ That only makes superior sense belov’d*.”

The poet, having established the foregoing precepts, proceeds to illustrate them by examples drawn from the ancients, and opens this part of his subject, with a striking apostrophe, in which he has drawn a finished picture of a true critic.

“ But where’s the man, who counsel can bestow,
“ Still pleas’d to teach, and yet not proud to
“ know?”

* This passage reminds me of a beautiful thought of Dr Young’s, who says——

“ Good-breeding is the blossom of good sense.”

“ Unbias’d,

- " Unbias'd, or by favour, or by spite ;
 " Not dully prepossess'd, nor blindly right ;
 " Tho' learn'd, well-bred ; and tho' well-bred,
 " sincere ;
 " Modestly bold, and humanly severe ;
 " Who, to a friend, his faults can freely show,
 " And gladly praise the merit of a foe ?
 " Blest with a taste exact, yet unconfin'd ;
 " A knowledge both of books and human kind ;
 " Gen'rous converse ; a soul exempt from pride ;
 " And love to praise with reason on his side ?"

The poet then answers the question himself, and shews that such critics were to be found in the better ages of *Athens* and *Rome*, and points out their characters, beginning first with *Aristotle*, whom he describes in the following bold metaphor.

- " The mighty Stagirite first left the shore,
 " Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore ;
 " He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
 " Led by the light of the Mæonian star."

With the Stagirite, *Horace* is contrasted, and his character is justly and happily described in two lines.

- " Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
 " And without method talks us into sense."

That of *Dionysius* succeeds——

- " See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,
 " And call new beauties forth from ev'ry line !"

These verses are censured by the Essayist, not only as spiritless, and prosaic, but as the character they express, is not equal to the merit of the critic whom they are intended to celebrate. Nevertheless, though they do not excel in point of versification, they are fraught with a great deal of meaning. In the first of these lines, on which the other depends, is described

that most material and useful part of an able critic's office, who (like the *Refiner*) purifies the rich ore of an original writer. For such an one, busied in *creating*, often neglects to separate and refine the mass, and pours out his riches rather in *bullion*, than in *sterling*.

I know not whether the Essayist is not too nice in his objections to the character of Petronius, of whom POPE says——

“Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,
“The scholar's learning, with the courtier's ease.”

The Essayist remarks, that the chief merit of Petronius, is that of telling a story with *grace* and *ease*: But the Poet is not here speaking (nor was it for his purpose to speak) of the *chief merit* of Petronius, but in what his merit *as a critic* consisted, which was softening the art of a scholar with the easy fancy of a courtier. And whoever reads and understands the critical parts of his abominable licentious fragments will see, that the poet has truly characterized him.

It is observable likewise, that though the essayist confines the merit of *Petronius* to the art of telling a story with *grace* and *ease*, yet he immediately adds, “that his own style is more *affected*, than even that “of his cotemporaries.” How the essayist can reconcile the *grace and ease* which he admits, with the *affectation* which he objects to him, I own I am at a loss to conceive.

Indeed the essayist observes, with good reason, that many of Petronius's metaphors are far fetched and mixed, of which he produces a very glaring instance. But this is so far from contradicting POPE's judgment of him, that it rather tends to establish it. Such as write with the court-like ease which Mr. POPE speaks of, are most apt to fall into a confusion of metaphors. It is not the correctness and accuracy, but the fancy and ease of Petronius, which our poet commends, and which in truth the essayist admits.

Our

Our author's character of Quintilian, also falls short of the essayist's estimate.

" In grave Quintilian's copious work, we find
" The justest rules, and clearest method join'd."

Whoever studies and practises *Composition*, cannot pay too much attention to the Institutes of Quintilian, whose rules will lead to perfection in this part of literature. This is amongst the highest praises a critic can *deserve*. And this is given to him, in these two very lines.

Nevertheless, the essayist remarks, that Quintilian deserves a more appropriate and poetical character: And indeed, considering that our author has, in the piece before us, been indebted to him for many of the precepts which he has so admirably illustrated, it is to be wished that his just encomium on the critic's merit, had been somewhat more amplified. But he seems to have reserved his strength to characterize the great Longinus; whom he addresses with an abruptness, which at once surprizes and charms us.

" Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
" And bless their Critic with a Poet's fire.
" An ardent Judge, who, zealous in his trust,
" With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just:
" *Whose* own example strengthens all his laws;
" *And* is himself that great Sublime he draws."

The spirit, energy, and propriety of these lines *, are equally admirable; and as the essayist candidly observes, more suitable to the character of the person addressed, than if he had coldly spoken of him in the third person.

The poet then gives a short, but animated history, of the decline of arts and sciences under despotic

* There seems, nevertheless, to be a grammatical inaccuracy in these lines, in making the copulative follow the genitive case of the pronoun.

power; and observes, that though they afterwards made some little efforts to revive, they were again overwhelmed:—

“ A second deluge Learning thus o’er-run,
“ And the Monks finish’d what the Goths begun.”

Then he turns towards the second period, in which the true critic again appeared at the revival of letters in the west.

“ But see! each Muse, in LEO’s golden days,
“ Starts from her trance, and trims her wither’d
“ bays,
“ Rome’s ancient Genius, o’er its ruins spread,
“ Shakes off the dust, and rears his rev’rend
“ head.”

These lines are perfectly poetical. With what awful imagery the genius of Rome is represented! Nothing can be finer than this descriptive personification. It is truly sublime.

Nevertheless, the excellence of this composition did not secure it against the malice of criticism. Mr. Dennis, and others, vented their spleen against it; but chiefly Mr. Dennis, a furious old critic by profession, who took offence at the following lines, where Mr. POPE, after having recommended a generous freedom of advice, and observed, that they can best bear reproof, who merit praise, adds—

“ ’Twere well, might Critics still this freedom
“ take
“ But Appius reddens at each word you speak,
“ And stares, tremendous, with a threat’ning
“ Eye,
“ Like some fierce Tyrant in old tapestry.”

It is said that Mr. Dennis took this picture to himself, and upon no other provocation wrote against the essay and its author, in the most absurd and virulent manner:

manner: For as to the mention made of him in ver. 270, he took it as a compliment, and said it was treacherously meant, as an inducement for him to over-look this abuse upon his person.

But the awkward apology he made in the preface to his frantic and illiberal critique, at once displays the judgment and temper of the man—"I can safely affirm," says he, "that I never attacked any of these writings, unless they had success, infinitely beyond their merit."

Here he avows the true motives of a professional critic: it is not merely the demerits of a piece, but the success of it, which provokes their invidious censure.

Mr. Dennis, however, at this time bore the character of an *acute critic**; though he was generally condemned as an ill-natured one: And our poet himself was once not without apprehensions from his severity; for being asked by a particular friend, whether he ever regarded what was written against him? he answered, "Never much; only the two or three first attacks: particularly when Dennis first wrote against me, it gave me some uneasiness, but it quickly subsided, when I came to read his Criticism, and found him in such violent rage."

Nevertheless, our poet, with an amiable frankness and candour, acknowledged the justice of some of his animadversions; and in a letter to the honourable J. C. Esq; he expresses himself with admirable temper and good sense, where, speaking of Dennis, he says, "To give him his due, he has objected to one or two lines with reason, and I will alter them in

* He appears, however, to have been indebted for this character to those (and they are the gross body of readers) who could not distinguish between the *mechanical* part of criticism, which was learned by the study of the French critics, and that more liberal part which can only be acquired by the *ment divinior*. And had Dennis's turn, on this foundation, been like Mr. Addison's, towards encomium rather than censure, it had enabled him to have written as good a critic on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as that we find in the papers of the SPECTATOR.

“ case of another edition : I will make my enemy do
 “ me a kindness, where he meant an injury, and so
 “ serve instead of a friend. What he observes at the
 “ bottom of page 20 of his Reflections, was objected
 “ to by yourself, and had been mended but for the
 “ haste of the press.”

What our author subjoins, affords an excellent lesson for authors in general to suppress their irritability, and to trust their reputations to the judgment of the discerning few, who will not fail to do justice between them and their critics.

“ I shall certainly,” says he, “ never make the
 “ least reply to him, not only because you advise
 “ me, but because I have ever been of opinion, that
 “ *that if a book can't answer for itself to the public,*
 “ *'tis to no sort of purpose for its author to do it.* If
 “ I am wrong in any sentiment of that *Essay*, I protest
 “ sincerely, I don't desire all the world should be
 “ deceived (which would be of very ill consequence)
 “ merely that I myself may be thought right (which
 “ is of very little consequence) : I would be the first
 “ to recant for the benefit of others, and the glory
 “ of myself ; for, (as I take it) when a man owns
 “ himself to have been in an error, he does but tell
 “ you in other words, that he is wiser than he was.”

It cannot be denied, however, but this piece, upon the whole, notwithstanding some trivial inaccuracies, may be justly esteemed as a pattern of composition in the didactic way. It was not only admired by every candid critic of taste and judgment at home, but its merit diffused itself abroad, where it was so highly esteemed, that it was translated into French verse, by General Hamilton, which occasioned the following letter from our poet to the translator.

“ If I could as well express, or (if you will allow
 “ me to say it) translate the sentiments of my heart,
 “ as you have done those of my head, in your excellent
 “ version of my *Essay* ; I should not only appear
 “ the best writer in the world, but what I must more
 “ desire to be thought, the most your servant of any
 “ man living. 'Tis an advantage, very rarely known,

“ to

“ to receive at once a great honour and a great improvement. This, Sir, you have afforded me ; having at the same time made others taste my sense, and taught me to understand my own ; if I may call that my own, which is indeed more properly your’s. Your verses are no more a translation of mine, than *Virgil’s* are of *Homer’s* ; but are like his, the justest imitation, and the noblest commentary.

“ In putting me into a French dress, you have not only adorned my outside, but mended my shape ; and if I am now a good figure, I must consider you have naturalized me into a country, which is famous for making every man a fine gentleman. It is by your means, that (contrary to most young travellers) I am come back much better than I went out.”

The strain of compliment in this letter will be excused, when it is considered that it was addressed, from a young writer, to the celebrated Author of the *Life of Count Gramont* ; and that fulsome adulation was, in truth, more particularly the vice of the times.

This piece was afterwards translated into French by other hands, and several versions of it have since appeared in the Latin language*.

But whatever reputation our author may have gained by this didactic essay, in which he displayed uncommon compass of learning, such extensive knowledge of human nature, and such strength of judgment ; yet, as a *Poet*, he acquired still greater fame by the *Rape of the Lock*. The full force of his poetical talents appears combined in this celebrated piece. All the beauty of description, the richness of invention, the glow of imagination, together with all the sprightliness of gallantry, are here alternately

* It was translated into Latin by Dr. Kirkpatrick, a gentleman well known in the literary world. As also by Mr. Smart. There was a Latin version of it likewise made by an unfortunate man, who was executed for *High-Treason*, relating to the *Coin*, whose name I therefore suppress.

displayed with the most exquisite harmony of numbers: And this may be justly deemed the most excellent of all heroi-comic compositions.

But to have a perfect relish for this excellent piece of raillery, it will be necessary to be apprized of the following anecdotes, which gave rise to it.

Mr. Caryl (a gentleman who was secretary to Queen Mary, wife of James the 2d. whose fortune he followed into France, and author of the comedy of *Sir Solomon Single*, and of several translations in Dryden's Miscellanies) originally proposed the subject to our author, in a view of putting an end, by this piece of ridicule, to a difference that was arisen between two noble families, those of Lord Petre and of Mrs. Fermor, on the trifling occasion of his having cut off a lock of her hair. This little liberty was taken too seriously; and though the two families had long been friends, it occasioned a coolness between them.

The first sketch of this exquisite piece, which Addison calls *Merum Sal*, was, as we learn from one of POPE's letters, written in two cantos only, in less than a fortnight, in the year 1721, when he was about the age of twenty-three.

Our author sent a copy of it to the Lady, with whom he was acquainted, and she was so delighted with it, that she distributed copies of it among her acquaintance, and at length prevailed on him to publish it, as appears by the motto*.

The piece produced the desired effect; for it reconciled the two families, and gave offence to no one but *Sir George Brown*, who often observed, with some degree of resentment, and indeed justice too, that he was made to talk nothing but nonsense, in the character of *Sir Plume*.

Our bard used to say, that what he wrote fastest, always pleased most; and the truth of his observation was exemplified in the uncommon success which at-

* *Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.*

tended this piece ; which was so well received, that he made it more considerable the next year, by the addition of the *Machinery of the Sylphs*, and extended it to five cantos, when it was printed, with an elegant letter to Mis. Fermor, which is prefixed to the piece*.

When Mr. POPE, as his friend and commentator observes, had projected to give the Rape of the Lock the form of a mock heroic poem, he was obliged to provide it with its machinery. For as the subject of

• He afterwards addressed another letter to the same lady, on her happy marriage, which, for good sense and elegant turn of sentiment, may be so justly deemed a pattern of epistolary composition, that I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing it.

“ Madam,

“ You are sensible, by this time, how much the tenderness of one man of merit, is to be preferred to the addresses of a thousand ; and, by this time, the gentleman you have made choice of, is sensible how great is the joy of having all those charms and good qualities, which have pleased so many, now applied to please one only. It was but just, that the same virtues which gave you reputation, should give you happiness ; and I can wish you no greater, than that you may reap it in as high a degree, as so much good nature must infallibly give it to your husband.

“ It may be expected, perhaps, that one who has the title of being a wit, should say something more polite on this occasion ; but I am really more a well-wisher to your felicity, than a celebrator of your beauty. Besides, you are now a married woman, and in a way to be a great many better things, than a fine lady ; such as an excellent wife, a faithful friend, a tender parent, and at last, as the consequence of them all, a saint in heaven. You ought now to hear nothing, but that which is all you ever desired to hear, (whatever others may have spoken to you) I mean truth ; and it is with the utmost that I do assure you, no friend you have, can more rejoice in any good that befalls you, is more sensibly delighted with the prospect of your future happiness, or more unfeignedly desires a long continuance of it.

“ I hope you will think it but just, that a man, who will certainly be spoken of as your admirer after he is dead, may have the happiness, while he is living, to be esteemed

Yours, &c.”

the

the epic consists of two parts, the *metaphysical* and the *civil*; so this mock epic, which is of the satiric kind, and receives its grace from the ludicrous mimicry of the other's pomp and solemnity, was to have the like composition: And as the *civil* part is intentionally debased by the choice of some trifling action, so should the *metaphysical*, by the application of some very extravagant system. A rule which, though neither *Boileau* nor *Garth* had been careful enough to attend to, our author's good sense would not suffer him to overlook; and that sort of machinery which his judgment taught him was only fit for his use, his admirable *invention* soon supplied. There was but one system in all nature that was to his purpose, the *Rosicrucian Philosophy*: And this, by the effort of a well directed imagination, he presently seized upon. The fanatic alchemists, in their search after the great secret, had invented a means altogether suitable to their end. It was a kind of theological philosophy, made up in a mixture of almost equal parts of Pagan Platonism, Christian Quietism, and the Jewish Cabbala: a mixture, monstrous enough to fright reason from human commerce. This system, he tells us, he took as he found it in a little French tract, called *Le Comte de Gabalis*. The book is written in dialogue, and is a delicate and very ingenious piece of raillery, by the *Abbe Villiers*, on that invisible sect, of which, the stories circulated at that time, made a great deal of noise at Paris. But, as in this satirical dialogue, Mr. POPE found several whimsies of a very high and mysterious nature told of these elementary beings, which were unfit to come into the machinery of such a sort of poem, he has, in their stead, with great judgment, introduced the legendary stories of *Guardian Angels*, and the nursery tales of the Fairies, and artfully accommodated them to the rest of the *Rosicrucian system*. To this artful address, he seems to have referred, in the two following lines.

“ If

“ If e’er one Vision touch’d thy infant thought
“ Of all the Nurse, and all the Priest have
“ taught.”

Thus, by the most beautiful invention imaginable, he has contrived, that, as in the serious epic, the popular belief supports the machinery; so in his mock epic, the machinery, taken from a circumstance the most humiliating to reason, in all philosophical fanaticism, should be employed to dismount learned pride and arrogance.

The invention of the machinery, which is skilfully interwoven in proper places, without the least appearance of being awkwardly patched together, was esteemed by Mr. POPE himself as the highest effort of his poetical art: And it is admitted by all critics, though perhaps somewhat invidiously, that it is in this piece POPE principally appears as a POET; having in this displayed more imagination, than in all his other works taken together. It should, however, be remembered, it is added by the essayist before-mentioned, “ that he was not the first former and creator of those beautiful machines, the *Sylphs*, on which his claim to imagination is chiefly founded. He found them existing ready to his hand, but has indeed employed them with singular judgment and artifice.” With what justice and consistency the critic makes this drawback on the portion of praise he thought proper to allow Mr. POPE, I shall examine when I consider the general nature and extent of his genius.

In the mean time, as I trust it will be no unwelcome amusement to the reader, I shall select some of the most striking passages to exemplify the general excellencies I have ventured to ascribe to this piece.

Our poet, in the opening, shews much address in making Belinda’s guardian Sylph forewarn her of some impending danger: and in disclosing to her the mystery of superintending aerial spirits, he ridicules

dicules female credulity with a great deal of pleasant raillery.

- “ Some secret Truths, from learned pride conceal’d,
 “ To Maids alone, and Children are reveal’d :
 “ What tho’ no credit doubting Wits may
 “ give ?
 “ The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.”

He likewise touches on female vanities, with much delicacy and good humour, and displays great fancy in describing the transformation of women of different dispositions, into different sorts of spirits.—

- “ Think not when Woman’s transient breath is
 “ fled,
 “ That all her Vanities at once are dead ;

* * * * *

- “ For when the Fair in all their pride expire,
 “ To their first elements their Souls retire.
 “ The Sprites of fiery Termagants, in Flame,
 “ Mount up and take a Salamander’s name.
 “ Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
 “ And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental Tea.
 “ The graver Prude sinks downward to a
 “ Gnome,
 “ In search of mischief still on Earth to roam.
 “ The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
 “ And sport and flutter in the fields of Air.”

Besides the delicate strokes of Satire and play of imagination exhibited in these lines, they afford, as the editor observes, a beautiful fiction on the platonic theology, of the continuance of the passions in *another state*, when the mind, before its leaving *this*, has not been well purified by philosophy.

There is great elegance and richness of fancy in the account which the Sylph gives of the influence which

which these superintending spirits have over female conduct, and there is a peculiar ease and pleasantry in the following lines, which ridicule affectation and coquetry.

" 'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
 " Instruct the eyes of young Coquettes to roll,
 " Teach Infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,
 " And little hearts to flutter at a Beau."

The description of the toilette is in the true mock-heroic stile, and is inimitable in its kind.

Homer, as the Essayist remarks, does not describe the armour of Achilles with more pomp and sublimity, than our poet dignifies the various apparatus employed in attiring Belinda; and the more to heighten the importance of the subject, the aerial train exercise their several functions in decorating the heroine.

" The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,
 " These set the head, and those divide the hair,
 " Some fold the sleeve, while others plait the
 " gown;
 " And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own."

The ensuing Canto opens with the scene on the Thames, which is perfectly gay and riant.—Belinda's charms, above all, are painted with a rapturous glow of imagination. There is great wit and gallantry, as well as exquisite sensibility, in these two lines.

" On her white breast a sparkling Cross she
 " wore,
 " Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore."

Here the *Lock*, which is the subject of the poem, is introduced with great propriety and judgment: and the sacrifice which the Baron makes to obtain it, is well conceived, and appropriated to exalt the
 mock

mock dignity of the subject He is described as having adored every power——

- “ But chiefly Love—to Love an Altar built,
- “ Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt.
- “ There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves ;
- “ And all the trophies of his former loves ;
- “ With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
- “ And breathes three am’rous sighs to raise the
“ fire.”

The guardian sylph, anxious for Belinda’s fate, calls together his aerial spirits, who are imaged with a fancy at once luxuriant and poetical.

- “ Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
- “ Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold ;
- “ Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
- “ Their fluid bodies half dissolv’d in light.
- “ Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
- “ Thin glitt’ring textures of the filmy dew,
- “ Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
- “ Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes ;
- “ While ev’ry beam new transient colours flings,
- “ Colours that change whene’er they wave their
“ wings.”

The enumeration, likewise, of the various tasks assigned to these aerial sprites, displays the same richness of imagination, together with a wildness of imagery which is admirable.

- “ Some in the fields of purest Ether play,
- “ And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.
- “ Some guide the course of wand’ring orbs on
“ high,
- “ Or roll the planets thro’ the boundless sky.
- “ Some less refin’d, beneath the moon’s pale
“ light
- “ Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
- “ Or suck the mists in grosser air below,

“ Or

- " Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
 " Or brew fierce tempests on the wat'ry main,
 " Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain."

In the lines which succeed, the poet has inimitably contrived to intermix the most delicate raillery, with the most beautiful imagery and perfect harmony of numbers.

- " Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,
 " Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious care ;
 " To save the powder from too rude a gale,
 " Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale ;
 " To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs ;
 " To steal from Rainbows, ere they drop in
 " show'rs,
 " A brighter wash ; to curl their waving hairs,
 " Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs ;
 " Nay oft, in dreams, invention we bestow,
 " To change a Flounce, or add a Fur below."

There is great humour and address in the conjectures which the sylph makes respecting the impending ill, where serious and light mischances, are artfully and pleasantly contrasted, and convey an oblique Satire on the female estimate of the disasters which surround them.

- " Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
 " Or some frail China jar receive a flaw,
 " Or stain her honour, or her new brocade ;
 " Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade ;
 " Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball ;
 " Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must
 " fall."

But our poet no where displays more poetical fancy, than where he assigns to these spirits their respective charges about Belinda's person.

" Haste

" Haste then, ye spirits ! to your charge repair ;
 " The flutt'ring fan be *Zephyretta's* care ;
 " The drops to thee, *Brillante*, we consign ;
 " And, *Momentilla*, let the watch be thine ;
 " Do thou, *Crispissa*, tend her fav'rite Lock ;
 " Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock."

The solemnity with which this charge is given, and the ingenuity with which the poet has appropriated names to the several spirits, correspondent with the various offices they are destined to discharge, is truly admirable * : and nothing can excel the poignant raillery which immediately follows on the hoop petticoat.

" To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,
 " We trust th' important charge, the Petticoat :
 " Oft have we known that seven-fold fence to
 " fail,
 " Tho' stiff with hoops, and arm'd with ribs of
 " whale ;
 " Form a strong line about the silver bound,
 " And guard the wide circumference around."

There is a great deal of delicate satire in consigning the care of this important part of female attire to fifty chosen spirits of special note, and the solemn air with which he bewails the weakness of that seven-fold fence, greatly heightens the poignance of the ridicule.

The punishments which Ariel denounces against those spirits, who shall be negligent of their charge, are happily imagined. The implements and furniture of the toilette, as the Essayist has observed, are,

* It had perhaps, been better, however, if Ariel, the chief of the aerial train, had himself taken some charge about Belinda's person ; the care of the favourite Lock had been worthy of his superintendence, and he might have entrusted the Lap-dog to some subaltern *Sprite*.

with

with great judgment and elegance, made the instruments of their punishment.

- " Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
 " His post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,
 " Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his
 "sins,
 " Be stop'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins ;
 " Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,
 " Or wedg'd whole ages in a bodkin's eye :
 " Gums and Pomatums shall his flight restrain,
 " While clog'd he beats his silken wings in vain ;
 " Or Alum styptics with contracting pow'r
 " Shrink his thin essence like a rivell'd flow'r :
 " Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel
 " The giddy motions of the whirling Mill,
 " In fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,
 " And tremble at the sea that froths below !"

There is incomparable merit in raising a subject so trivial by the pomp and dignity of style. But this excellence is no where more conspicuous than in the next canto, where our poet displays all the power of description in the representation of a game at *ombre*.

With what pleasant pomp the king of spades is introduced !

- " With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
 " The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,
 " Puts forth one manly leg, to fight reveal'd,
 " The rest, his many-colour'd robe conceal'd."

The same may be said of the King of Clubs, who was taken by the queen of Spades.

- " The Club's black Tyrant first her victim dy'd,
 " Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride :
 " What boots the regal circle on his head,
 " His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread ;
 " That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
 " And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe !"

But,

But, speaking of the Knave of Diamonds, our Poet still rises in excellence, and, to the utmost elegance of description, adds the nicest touches of oblique Raillery.

- “ The *Knave* of *Diamonds* tries his wily arts,
 “ And wins (*oh, shameful chance!*) the *Queen* of
 “ *Hearts*.
 “ At this, the blood the virgin’s cheek forsook,
 “ A livid paleness spreads o’er all her look ;
 “ She sees, and trembles at th’ approaching ill,
 “ Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.
 “ And now (as oft in some distemper’d state)
 “ On one nice Trick depends the gen’ral fate :
 “ An Ace of Hearts steps forth : The King un-
 “ seen
 “ Lurk’d in her hand, and mourn’d his captive
 “ Queen :
 “ He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
 “ And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
 “ The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky ;
 “ The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.”

There is great address in making the *Knave* of *Diamonds* win the *Queen* of *Hearts*, which conveys a delicate satire on the interested attachments of the fair, who prefer glittering Knaves to the plain Man of Worth. The political illustration likewise of the crisis in a distempered state, is well conceived, and happily adapted.

The author of the essay, I have so often had occasion to mention, very candidly owns, that this description of the game of ombre, is equal, if not superior to the Scacchia of *Vida* ; for as *chefs* is a play of a far higher order than *ombre*, Mr. *Pope* had a more difficult task than *Vida*, to raise this his inferior subject, into equal dignity and gracefulness.

There is great merit likewise in painting the scene of the tea-table, which immediately follows, though the same dignity and elegance is not preserved as in the

the foregoing. The introductory line is particularly faulty:

“ For lo! the Board with Cups and Spoons is
“ crown’d.”

The appellation of *Cups* and *Spoons* in this place, are too low and common; and they ought to have been mentioned with a periphrasis, to have preserved the mock dignity of the piece. Mr. POPE was here unmindful of Horace’s remark —

“ *Difficile est propriè communia dicere,*”

The machinery, however, is here very happily introduced, watching over Belinda while she is sipping her coffee; and the anxiety with which the aerial spirits superintend her motions, is elegantly represented.

“ Straight hover round the Fair her airy band;
“ Some, as she sipp’d, the fuming liquor fann’d,
“ Some o’er her lap their careful plumes display’d,
“ Trembling, and conscious of the rich bro-
“ cade.”

The sylphs spreading their plumes to preserve the brocade from stains, is prettily imagined; but our Poet still rises in delicacy of imagination, when he describes their solicitous zeal as the danger draws near.

“ Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprites repair,
“ A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the
“ hair;
“ And thrice they *twitch’d* the Diamond in her
“ ear,
“ Thrice she look’d back, and thrice the Foe
“ drew near.”

The

The triumph of the Baron on obtaining the Lock is described in an admirable parody of Virgil *, in which the poet has skilfully contrived to intersperse some exquisite strokes of satire and ridicule, on the little vanities and foibles of the fair sex.

- " While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
 " Or in a coach and fix the British Fair,
 " As long as Atalantis shall be read,
 " Or the small pillow grace a Lady's bed,
 " While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
 " When num'rous wax-lights in bright order
 " blaze,
 " While nymphs take treats, or assignations
 " give,
 " So long my honour, name, and praise shall
 " live!"

In the fourth canto, which opens with the rage and despair of Belinda, for the loss of her Lock, there is a fine opposition of real and imaginary distresses, which form an assemblage at once striking and agreeable.

- " Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,
 " Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
 " Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their blifs,
 " Not ancient Ladies when refus'd a kiss,
 " Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
 " Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinn'd awry,
 " E'er felt such rage," &c.

The Poet's closing the climax with the slightest distaste of all, gives additional poignance to the ridicule in this parody.

There is something very picturesque in the description of the cave of SPLEEN, who is admirably characterized.

" She

* " *Dum juga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit, &c.*"

" She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
 " Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head."

Her attendants likewise, ILL-NATURE and AFFECTATION, are well appropriated. It must be owned, however, that there is nothing very characteristic in the picture of ILL-NATURE; but AFFECTATION is drawn with a masterly pencil.

" There Affectation with a sickly mien,
 " Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
 " Practis'd to lisp, and hang the head aside,
 " Faints into airs, and languishes with pride."

The phantoms raised by the vapour which flies over the place, are happily conceived, and expressed in the boldest imagery.

" Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
 " Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires:
 " Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
 " And crystal domes, and Angels in machines."

The invocation of Umbriel, the Gnome, to the Goddess of Spleen, is replete with agreeable raillery; particularly where he conjures her by the merit of his former services, which are enumerated with great pleasantry.

" But Oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,
 " Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,

* * * * *

" If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,
 " Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,
 " Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,
 " Or discompos'd the head-dress of a Prude,

" Hear

* * * * *

"Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin,
"That single act gives half the world the Spleen."

These concluding lines convey a delicate compliment on Belinda's good nature, and powerful influence.

The vial which the goddess presents to the Gnome, filled——

"——with fainting fears,
"Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears,"

is introduced with great poetical fancy,

The speech by which Thalestris endeavours to inflame the rage of Belinda, is admirable, and seasoned with exquisite raillery on the pains which the fair will patiently undergo, to improve their charms.

"Was it for this you took such constant care,
"The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
"For this your Locks in paper durance bound?
"For this with tort'ring irons wreath'd around?
"For this with fillets strain'd your tender head?
"And bravely bore the double loads of lead?"

The address with which she works up Belinda's resentment, by insinuating the prejudice her reputation will suffer by the ravisher's displaying her Lock, is well imagined: And the exclamation in the conclusion of her speech, displays the most lively fancy, and agreeable satire.

"And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
"Expos'd thro' crystal to the gazing eyes,
"And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,
"On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?"

"Sooner

- “ Sooner shall grafs in Hyde-Park Circus grow,
 “ And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
 “ Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
 “ Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!”

The lamentation of Belinda is not less beautiful. With what propriety does she make the following exclamation, which pleasantly expresses her idea of a lonely situation?

- “ Oh had I rather unadmir’d, remain’d
 “ In some lone isle, or distant Northern land;
 “ Where the gilt Chariot never marks the way,
 “ Where none learn Ombre, none e’er taste
 “ Bohea!”

It is usual in heroic poems to prepare the reader for some great events, by introducing certain prefiguring omens; and the poet has artfully introduced such portentous signs, as serve to keep up the mock dignity of the piece, and, at the same time, throw an oblique raillery on the trivial objects of female superstition.

* * * * *

- “ Thrice from my trembling hand the patch box
 “ fell;
 “ The tott’ring China shook without a wind,
 “ Nay Poll sat mute, and Shock was most un-
 “ kind!”

The speech of the grave *Clarissa*, in the last canto, who endeavours to compose the resentment of *Belinda*, cannot be too much admired. There is so much excellent good sense, fraught with such useful moral, and expressed with such harmony of numbers, that no reader of sentiment and taste will think the following quotation too long.

- " Say, why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd
 " most,
 " The wise man's passion, and the vain man's
 " toast?
 " Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford,
 " Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd?
 " Why round our coaches crowd the white-glov'd
 " Beaux,
 " Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
 " How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
 " Unless good sense preserves what beauty gains:
 " That men may say, when we the front-box
 " grace,
 " Behold the first in virtue as in face!
 " Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
 " Charm'd the small-pox, or chac'd old age away;
 " Who would not scorn what housewife's cares
 " produce,
 " Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
 " To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,
 " Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.
 " But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,
 " Curl'd or uncurl'd, since Locks will turn to
 " grey;
 " Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
 " And she who scorns a man, must die a maid;
 " What then remains but well our power to use,
 " And keep good-humour still whate'er we lose?
 " And trust me, dear! good-humour can prevail,
 " When airs, and flights, and screams, and scold-
 " ing fail.
 " Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
 " Charms strike the sight, but Merit wins the
 " soul."

The poet, with great address, makes this incomparable speech pass unapplauded——

" Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her *Prude*."

By

By which delicate stroke, the poet obliquely satirizes the light part of the sex; among whom good sense and decorum are ridiculed as prudery.

Clarissa's speech having no effect, the attack begins for the recovery of the Lock. The essayist above-mentioned is of opinion, that this battle is described in very lofty and pompous terms: A game of Romps, he adds, was never so dignified before.

In this, however, I cannot agree with him. Impartiality obliges me to confess, that I do not esteem this description equal to the rest of the poem. Nor can I wholly agree with the essayist that the weapons made use of are the most proper imaginable; such as the lightning of the lady's eyes, intolerable frowns, a pinch of snuff and a bodkin. Of the two last, indeed, the poet has very ingeniously availed himself; but the former, after having been hackneyed by every whining love-sick sonneteer, are become too trite and common to afford any new and striking images, even from the pen of POPE. Witness the following lines.

" When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
 " Chloe step'd in, and kill'd him with a frown;
 " She smil'd to see the doughty hero slain,
 " But, at her smile, the beau reviv'd again."

These lines might pass uncensured, and might even be deemed pretty in an indifferent poet; but the sentiments and expressions are too common-placed to be applauded in a genius: And this description, upon the whole, does not seem to be exalted to that height of mock dignity, to which Mr. POPE's talents were capable of raising it.

It must be admitted, however, that he shews great address, where he described Belinda throwing snuff at the Baron, where the machinery is again artfully introduced.

" The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,
 " The pungent grains of titillating dust."

The last line affords an instance of a very beautiful periphrasis.

The poet shews great management in the catastrophe of the piece. The Lock, the recovery of which was the end of all this contest, is lost; which occasions various conjectures concerning the place of its concealment, and gives the poet an opportunity of making a very ingenious application of that celebrated fiction of *Ariosto*, that all things lost on earth are treasured in the moon, wherein he has introduced a great deal of keen satire.

“ Some thought it mounted to the Lunar sphere,
 “ Since all things lost on earth are treasur’d there.
 “ There heroes wits are kept in pond’rous vases,
 “ And beaux in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.
 “ There broken vows, and death-bed alms are
 “ found,
 “ And lovers hearts with ends of riband bound,
 “ The courtier’s promises, and sick men’s pray’rs,
 “ The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
 “ Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
 “ Dry’d butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.”

The Lock, however, is at length discovered in the skies, where it is lodged with great poetical fancy; and, like *Berenice’s*, becomes a constellation. The poet does not suffer the reader to lose sight of his beautiful machinery: The Sylphs, who had been so assiduous to preserve it, are finally introduced as viewing it with delight, while it ascends to heaven.

“ The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
 “ And pleas’d pursue its progress through the
 “ skies.”

The poet preserves the vigour of his poetical fancy to the last. Even after the favourite Lock is transformed into a constellation, he, with inimitable pleasantry, describes the influence it will have on the sons of earth.

“ This

" This the Beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
 " And hail with music its propitious ray;
 " This the blest Lover shall for Venus take,
 " And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake:
 " This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
 " When next he looks thro' Galilæo's eyes;
 " And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
 " The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome."

Thus the poet has admirably fulfilled the precept of Horace——

" ——— *Servetur ad inum*
 " *Qualis ab incepto processerit.*"

It will scarce be credited that a man could be found so devoid of judgment and taste, or in whom envy and ill-nature were so predominant, as to betray him into a senseless and illiberal criticism on this excellent piece; and yet that doughty critic, Mr. Dennis, whom I have before had occasion to mention, did not scruple to expose his weakness and his malice in the most ridiculous and scurrilous animadversions. His resentment and malevolence so far got the better of the little critical merit which some have allowed him to possess, that he absurdly condemned several passages, for reasons which constituted their capital beauties. Such an impotent attack had the effect which might be expected: It served to render the critic contemptible, while Mr. POPE's fame rose above all attempts to suppress it; and was not confined to his own country: this celebrated poem having been translated into several languages. There was, in particular, a French version of it, which was printed at Paris, in the year 1728. There were likewise translations of it in Italian, by the Abbé Conti, a noble Venetian; and by the Marquis Rongons, envoy extraordinary from the Duke of Modena to the late king. There have likewise been Latin

versions of it; and a prose irony of it, made its appearance in English*.

This poem happened to be published at a time when party contests ran high, and among other subjects of dispute, the famous Barrier treaty was much canvassed, and applauded by the Whigs. Mr. POPE, though too honest and judicious to be a party-man, was nevertheless from his birth and education ranked among the Tories, which occasioned the author of a piece, entitled *A Key* † to the Lock, - whimsically to

* Among the compliments paid to our author on this occasion, we must not omit the Eulogy of Sir William Trumball, who, in one of his letters to our author, says—

“ You have given me the truest satisfaction imaginable, not only in making good the just opinion I have ever had of your reach of thought, and my idea of your comprehensive genius; but likewise in that pleasure I take, as an Englishman, to see the French, even Boileau himself, in his *Lutrin*, outdone in your poem: for you descend, *leviorem plectro*, to all the nicer touches, that your own observation and wit furnish, on such a subject as requires the finest strokes and the liveliest imagination.”

Dean Berkley likewise, in a letter addressed to our author, dated May 1st, 1714, speaks of it in the highest terms of applause:

“ I have accidentally met with your *Rape of the Lock* here, having never seen it before. Stile, painting, judgment, spirit, I had already admired in other of your writings: but in this I am charmed with the magic of your invention, with all those images, allusions and inexplicable beauties, which you raise so surprisngly, and at the same time so naturally, out of a trifle.”

To the testimonies in favour of this poem must be added that of the learned and ingenious author of the *Elements of Criticism*, who says—“ The *Rape of the Lock* is a genteel and gay species of writing, less strained than the others § before mentioned, and is pleasant or ludicrous, without having ridicule for its chief aim; giving way, however, to ridicule, where it arises from a particular character, such as that of *Sir Plume*.” He does not scruple to add, that the versification is the most complete of any in the English language.

† This piece of pleasantry was penned by Mr. POPE himself.

§ Meaning the *Virgil Travestie* of Scarron—The *Secchia Rapita* of Tassoni—The *Batrachomyomachia* of Homer,—and the *Lutrin* of Boileau.

maintain

maintain, that the Rape of the Lock was an allegorical poem, written with a view to expose and ridicule that treaty: And taking it for granted, that, by the Lock, the treaty was to be understood, he very readily adapted every part to square with this *postulatum*.

The fame of this poem, together with the agreeable nature of the object, tempted many witslings and poetasters to play with the favourite Lock, and exercise their little talents for double entendre. These fugitive Essays, the offsprings of a weak judgment and a prurient imagination, are deservedly forgotten. But the reader probably will not be displeased with the following lines, which have something lively in them, though not very poetical, and have never yet, that I know of, been made public.

To Belinda, upon the *Rape* of the *Lock*.

- " Pleas'd in these lines, Belinda, you may view
 " How things are priz'd which once belong'd to
 " you.
 " If on some meaner head, this Lock had grown,
 " The Nymph despis'd, the Rape had been un-
 " known.
 " But what concerns the Valiant, and the Fair,
 " The Muse asserts as her peculiar care:
 " Thus Helen's Rape, and Menelaus' wrong,
 " Became the subject of Great Homer's song.
 " And lost in ancient times, the golden Fleece
 " Was rais'd to Fame by all the Wits of Greece.
 " But yet if some, with Malice more than
 " Wit,
 " Will needs misconstrue what the Poet writ;
 " Deem it but Scandal which the jealous raise,
 " To blast his Fame, and to detract your Praise.
 " Too bright your Form, and too renown'd his
 " Song,
 " Not to draw Envy from the baser throng,

" Whose minds, I know not by what awkward
 " fate,
 " Like eyes a-squint, look every way but straight.
 " Nature, to your undoing, arms mankind
 " With strength of body, artifice of mind ;
 " But gives your feeble Sex, made up of Fears,
 " No guard but Virtue, no redress but Tears.
 " Yet custom (seldom to your favour gain'd)
 " Absolves the Virgin, when by Force constrain'd.
 " Thus Lucrece lives unblemish'd in her Fame,
 " A bright example of young Tarquin's shame.
 " Such Praise is yours—And such shall you possess,
 " Your Virtue equal, tho' your Loss be less.
 " Then smile, Belinda, at reproachful Tongues,
 " Still warm our Hearts, and still inspire our
 " Songs ;
 " But would your Charms to distant times extend ;
 " Let Kneller paint them, and let POPE com-
 " mend."

Mr. POPE's next poetical composition, was an *Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate Lady*, which came warm from the heart, and does honour to his sensibility.

This lady is supposed to have been the same person, to whom the Duke of Buckingham addressed some lines on her intentions of retiring into a monastery, which design is also hinted at in one of Mr. POPE's Letters, where he says, addressing himself, as it is presumed, to this very person: " If you are
 " resolved, in revenge to rob the world of so much
 " example as you may afford it, I believe your de-
 " sign will be vain: for even in a monastery, your
 " devotions cannot carry you so far towards the next
 " world, as to make this lose sight of you: but you
 " will be like a star, that, while it is fixed in hea-
 " ven, shines over all the earth. Wheresoever pro-
 " vidence shall dispose of the most valuable thing I
 " know, I shall ever follow you with my sincerest
 " wishes; and my best thoughts will be perpetually
 " waiting upon you, when you never hear of me or
 " them.

"them. Your own guardian angels cannot be more constant or more silent."

This unfortunate lady, as Mr. POPE very properly calls her, was distinguished by her rank, fortune and beauty, and was committed to the guardianship of an uncle, who gave her an education suitable to her expectations; but while she was yet very young, she was supposed to have entertained a partiality for a young gentleman of inferior degree, which occasioned her to refuse a match which her guardian proposed to her.

It was not long before her correspondence with this gentleman was discovered by means of spies, whom her guardian had employed to watch over her conduct, and when he upbraided her with this secret intercourse, she had too much truth and honour to deny the charge.

The uncle, finding her affections so rooted, that she had not power to withdraw them, forced her abroad, where she was received with the respect due to her quality, but confined from the sight of every one but the dependants of this rigid guardian.

Her despondent lover transmitted several letters on the faith of repeated assurances, that they would be privately delivered to her, but his hopes were betrayed, and his letters, instead of being presented to the object of his affections, were sent to England, and only served to render her confinement more strait and severe.

In this miserable and hopeless condition, she languished a considerable time in sickness and sorrow, till at length she put an end to her life with a sword, which she bribed a woman servant to procure her, and was found yet warm upon the ground.

Being, by the laws of the place, denied Christian sepulture, she was interred without the least solemnity, being cast into the common earth, without any mournful attendants to perform the last duties of affection, and only followed by some young people

in the neighbourhood, who bestrewed her grave with flowers

Such a moving catastrophe might have inspired a savage with sensibility; but in Mr. POPE it awakened all the power of the Pathos. With what awful solemnity he suddenly commands our attention, and calls forth all our sympathy, in the very opening, where in fancy he beholds the apparition of the bleeding fair!

“ What beck’ning Ghost, along the moonlight
“ shade

“ Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?

“ ’Tis she!——but why that bleeding bosom
“ gor’d,

“ Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?

“ Oh, ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,

“ Is it, in heav’n, a crime to love too well?

“ To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,

“ To act a Lover’s, or a Roman’s part?

“ Is there no bright reversion in the sky,

“ For those who greatly think, or bravely die?”

The indignation he expresses against the inhuman guardian is very striking and affecting.

“ But thou, false Guardian of a charge too good,

“ Thou mean deserter of thy brother’s blood!

“ See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,

“ These cheeks now fading at the blast of
“ death.”

Then follows a sudden execration, so forcible, that it instantly strikes the mind with terror.

“ Thus, if eternal Justice rules the ball,

“ Thus shall your wives, and thus your children
“ fall.”

The poet farther describing the sudden vengeance which shall await such inhumanity, breaks forth into the following bold prosopopoeia.

- “ There passengers shall stand, and pointing
 “ say,
 “ (While the long fun’rals blacken all the way)
 “ Lo! these were they, whose souls the Furies
 “ steel’d,
 “ And curs’d with hearts unknowing how to
 “ yield.
 “ Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
 “ The gaze of fools, and pageants of a day!
 “ So perish all, whose breasts ne’er learn’d to
 “ glow
 “ For others good, or melt at others woe.”

How inimitably has the poet contrived to temper the horror of the dire execrations he vented, by closing with a passage of exquisite humanity and sympathy!

With what inexpressible tenderness likewise, and with what moving accents does he aggravate her deplorable fate, by introducing the affecting circumstance of her dying in a foreign land, unattended by any mournful friend to grace her obsequies?

- “ No friend’s complaint, no kind domestic tear
 “ Pleas’d thy pale ghost, or grac’d thy mournful
 “ bier.
 “ By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos’d,
 “ By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos’d,
 “ By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn’d,
 “ By strangers honour’d, and by strangers mourn’d!”

The forcible repetition of the word *foreign*, has, as the critic observes, an admirable effect constantly to recall to mind the aggravating circumstance which the poet would impress on the reader’s sensibility.

There

There is another, though not so obvious, beauty in these lines. It is observable that in all these lines, except the last, the pause is uniformly at the fourth syllable; and this farther contributes to rivet in the mind the several parts or amplifications of the mournful circumstance which the poet describes. For as an acute critic * has observed, uniformity in the members of a thought, requires equal uniformity in the members of the period which expresses that thought.

In the succeeding lines, the poet has skilfully contrived to blend the most moving sentiments, with a just indignant satire on the modes of affected lamentation :

“ What tho’ no friends in fable weeds appear,
 “ Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a
 “ year,
 “ And bear about the mockery of woe
 “ To midnight dances, and the public show ?
 “ What though no weeping Loves thy ashes
 “ grace,
 “ Nor polish’d marble emulate thy face !”

It is difficult to say, whether the pathos of the sentiments, the keenness of the satire, or the beauty of the poetry, is most admirable in these lines.

The poet, with great judgment and address, reserves the affecting circumstance of her being denied the rites of sepulture, with which he closes these moving exclamations.

“ What tho’ no sacred earth allow thee room,
 “ Nor hallow’d dirge be mutter’d o’er thy tomb !
 “ Yet shall thy grave with rising flow’rs be
 “ dress’d,
 “ And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast :
 “ There shall the Morn her earliest tears be-
 “ flow,
 “ There the first roses of the year shall blow.”

* Lord Kaims,

What

What a delicate poetical fancy is displayed in these concluding lines! In short, a reader of any taste and sensibility, must thrill at every line of this excellent elegy, which produces that sympathetic effect arising from all heart-felt compositions.

The Prologue to Addison's tragedy of *Cato*, stands next in order among Mr. POPE's poetical compositions. This, which was written at Mr. Addison's request, the author of the essay very candidly admits to be superior even to any of Dryden's. It is, as he observes, solemn and sublime; and appropriated to the tragedy alone which it was designed to introduce. The most striking images and allusions it contains, are taken with judgment from some passages in the life of Cato himself. Such is that fine stroke, more lofty than any thing in the tragedy itself, where the poet says, that when Cæsar, amid the pomp and magnificence of a triumph,

" Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in
" state;

" As her dead Father's rev'rend image past,

" The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast;

" 'The Triumph ceas'd —— tears gush'd from
" ev'ry eye;

" The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by;

" Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,

" And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword."

Such again is the happy allusion to an old story mentioned in Martial, of Cato's coming into the theatre, and presently going out again.

" Such Plays alone should win a British ear,

" As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear."

From

From whence he draws an artful panegyric on the purity and excellence of the play he was recommending *.

As

* When Mr. Addison had finished this Tragedy of Cato, he brought it to Mr. POPE, and left it with him three or four days for his opinion. Mr. POPE, with his wonted ingenuous candor, told him he thought he had better not exhibit it on the stage; and added, that by printing it only as a classical performance, he might make it turn to a profitable account, as the piece was very well penned, though not theatrical enough to succeed on the stage. Mr. Addison assured him that he coincided with him in opinion, and seemed disposed to follow his advice: but some time after he told him that some friends, whom he was cautious of disoblighing, insisted on his bringing it on the stage. He assured Mr. POPE, however, that it was with no party views, and pressed him to shew it to the Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke, and to repeat his assurances to them, that he did not by any means intend it as a party play.

Our author executed his commission in the most friendly manner; and the play, together with the scheme for bringing it upon the stage, meeting with their approbation, it was represented accordingly.

Throughout the whole conduct of this business, Mr. Addison appeared to be so extremely apprehensive of *party* imputations, that Mr. POPE having worded the prologue thus,

“*Britons*, ARISE, be worth like this approv’d,
“ And shew you have the virtue to be mov’d;”

he very strongly objected to the boldness of the expression, saying, it would be called stirring the people to rebellion, and therefore earnestly begged of our author to soften it, by substituting something less obnoxious. On this account it was altered, as it now stands, to *Britons*, ATTEND,—though at the expence of the sense and spirit. Notwithstanding this, the very next year, when the present illustrious family came to the succession, Mr. Addison thought fit to make a merit of Cato, as purposely and directly written, to oppose the schemes of a faction §: his poem to her royal highness the Princess of Wales, beginning in this manner:

“ The

§ This play being considered as a warning that liberty was in danger during the Tory administration, Bolingbroke, to obviate the popular impressions it might make, sent one night, when the applause of the audience was very violent, for Booth, who played Cato, into his box, between the acts, and presented him with fifty guineas, in acknowledgment, as he expressed it with great address, for defending the cause of liberty so well against a *perpetual dictator*.

As this prologue is a model for this species of writing, in the serious way, so the epilogue to Mr. Rowe's *Jane Shore*, which follows, is as perfect a pattern of composition in the ludicrous way. It was written for Mrs. Oldfield, though never spoken. It is penned in a lively spirit of gallantry, and facetious raillery: which, as is well remarked by the essayist, the audience expect in all epilogues to the most serious and pathetic pieces. It is strange, that though this perversion of taste has been condemned by all judicious writers, that the scandalous practice of closing such pieces with epilogues full of ribaldry and loose double entendre, should still continue.

We are now to consider Mr. POPE in the character of a translator, and to examine his merit in that capacity in his version of the *Epistle from Sappho to Phaon*, translated from *Ovid*. This the author of the essay allows to be rendered with faithfulness and with elegance; and that it is so in general, cannot be disputed.

Nevertheless, as I profess not to be the panegyrist, but the historian of Mr. POPE; I can no more subscribe to a general commendation without taking notice of such exceptions as occur, than I can admit a general censure which appears to be ill-

“ The muse that oft with sacred raptures fir’d,
 “ Has gen’rous thoughts of liberty inspir’d;
 “ And boldly rising for Britannia’s laws,
 “ Engag’d great CATO in his country’s cause;
 “ On you submissive waits.”

Indeed Mr. Addison’s moderation in party, appears to have been all affected; though he used to talk much of it, and often recommend it to Mr. POPE, adding, that he ought not to be contented with the applause of half the nation. He used to blame Steele greatly for being too much a party-man; and yet, when he found himself that he was likely to promote his interest by party attachments, he entered into them with a zeal which does his memory no credit: for this man of moderate principles, became the champion of a party, and did not scruple to pen the *Freeholder*.

founded.

founded. Impartiality, therefore, obliges me to observe, that in some passages the translator does not seem to have preserved the sense or spirit of the original. For instance, Sappho says,

“ ——— *Omniq[ue] a parte placebam,*
“ *Sed tum praecep[er]e, cum fit amoris opus.*”

which the translator renders thus,

“ In all I pleas’d, *but most in what was best ;*
“ And the *last* joy was dearer than the *rest.*”

These lines do not appear to convey the meaning of the original, either with faithfulness or elegance.

The first line is faulty in point of versification ; and, to use our bard’s own remarks, ten low words creep in one dull line. Add to this, that the sense in the translation is equivocal ; for *non constat* what was best. This may either be taken in a serious or ludicrous sense. Whereas in the original the meaning is precise, and well ascertained by the words *amoris opus* : though it must be confessed that the expression in the Latin, is not very elegant or delicate.

As to the last line it is wholly redundant, and has no place in the original. It may be added likewise, that there is an inaccuracy in the use of the word *rest*, to denote *preceding* joys.

The version likewise of the following lines seems liable to censure.

“ *Quique, ubi jam amborum fuerat confusa vo-*
“ *luptas,*
“ *Plurimus in lasso corpore languor erat.*”

Which are thus translated,

“ Till all dissolving in the trance we lay,
“ And in tumultuous raptures dy’d away.”

These

These lines, it is true, convey all that is warm in the original, but they have not the same elegant turn. For in the Latin, the last line reflects an idea which corrects in some degree the prurience in the former, by intimating that *sensibility* still survived *sensuality*.

It is with pleasure, however, I acknowledge, that, in many passages, the translator rises greatly superior to his original. The following lines, for instance, though very beautiful, are surpassed by the translation :

- “ *Ecce, jacent collo sparsi sine lege capilli ;*
 “ *Nec premit articulos lucida gemma meos.*
 “ *Veste tegor vili : nullum est in crinibus aurum :*
 “ *Non Arabo noster rore capillus olet.*”

which are thus rendered —————

- “ No more my robes in waving purple flow,
 “ Nor on my hand the sparkling di'monds
 “ glow ;
 “ No more my locks in ringlets curl'd diffuse
 “ The costly sweetness of Arabian dew,
 “ Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind,
 “ That fly disorder'd with the wanton wind.”

Neither is the original equal to the version in the following passage :

- “ *Scribimus, et lachrymis oculi rorantur abortis :*
 “ *Aspice, quam sit in hoc multa litura loco.*”

The translator says,

- “ See, while I write, my words are lost in
 “ tears !
 “ The less my sense, the more my love ap-
 “ pears.”

The

The second line in the Latin is flat and languid, but the translator has improved it by an elegant turn of sentiment.

It may be said of the succeeding lines likewise, that they greatly excel the original, though, by the bye, it must be confessed, that they are rather a paraphrase, than a translation of the Latin.

*" Tu mihi cura, Phaon ; te somnia nostra redu-
" cunt ;*

" Somnia formoso candidiora die.

" Illic te invenio, quanquam regionibus absis ;

" Sed non longa satis gaudia somnus habet."

These lines are thus translated :

" 'Tis thou art all my care and my delight,

" My daily longing, and my dream by night :

*" Oh night more pleasing than the brightest
" day,*

" When fancy gives what absence takes away,

" And, dress'd in all its visionary charms,

" Restores my fair deserter to my arms !"

There is something inexpressibly fond, tender, and poetical in these plaintive lines. Indeed, the whole translation breathes such passionate and pathetic sentiments, as are worthy of the exquisite sensibility of the celebrated and amorous Sappho * : and the versification is, in point of melody, next to that of the pastorals. The two following verses, as the essayist observes, in which alliteration is successfully used, are perhaps the most harmonious of any in our language, in rhyme.

* She is supposed to have described the violent symptoms attending the passion of love, in so strong, lively and accurate a manner, that the physician *Eristratus* is said to have discovered the secret malady of the prince *Antiochus*, who was in love with his mother-in-law *Stratonice*, merely by examining the symptoms of his patient's distemper by this description.

" Ye

" Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,
" And softly lay me on the waves below !"

But the most pathetic subject for elegiac epistle, is that of *Abelard* and *Eloisa*, who flourished in the twelfth century, and were two of the most distinguished persons of their age.

Abelard was reputed the most handsome, as well as most learned man of his time. An old chronicle, quoted by Andrew du Chesne, informs us, that scholars flocked to his lectures from all quarters of the Latin world: and his cotemporary, St. Bernard, relates, that he numbered among his disciples many principal ecclesiastics and cardinals, at the court of Rome. Abelard himself boasts, that when he retired into the country, he was followed by such immense crowds of scholars, that neither lodging nor provisions were to be had sufficient for them. Being embroiled in controversy, he met with the fate of many learned men, to be accused of heresy; for, by the influence and authority of St. Bernard, his opinion of the Trinity was condemned, by a council held at Sens, 1140. But the talents of Abelard were not confined to theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, and the thorny paths of scholasticism; for he gave proofs of a lively genius by many poetical performances.

It is to be regretted that we have no exact picture of Eloisa's person. Abelard himself says, that she was, "*facie non infima*:" But her uncommon learning is confirmed by many circumstances. She indisputably understood the Latin, Greek and Hebrew tongues: Her literature, as Abelard tells us, "made her the most celebrated of any lady in the kingdom." And her literary merit attached him to her more powerfully.

But this extraordinary pair were for nothing more famous, than for their unfortunate passion: and their distresses were of a most singular and peculiar kind. After a long series of calamities, they retired each to
a several

a several convent, and consecrated the remainder of their days to religion. It was many years after this separation, that a letter of Abelard's to a friend, which contained the history of his misfortune, fell into the hands of Eloisa. This awakening all her tenderness, occasioned those celebrated letters, out of which the following poem, which presents so lively a picture of the struggle of grace and nature, virtue and passion, is partly extracted.

The solemnity of the exordium, is admirably adapted to induce a disposition for receiving such sensations as the poet would wish to impress. Eloisa, who is supposed to be surveying the gloom around her, and meditating on the subject of her sorrow, thus breaks forth——

- “ In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
- “ Where heav'nly-pensive Contemplation dwells,
- “ And ever-musing Melancholy reigns,
- “ What means this tumult in a Vestal's veins ?
- “ Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat ?
- “ Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat ?”

Then hinting at the cause which revived these tumultuous ideas, that is, Abelard's letter, she determines not to pronounce that dear fatal name, nor yet to write it. But the manner in which she is involuntarily impelled, is beautifully and pathetically described in the following broken starts of passion.

- “ O write it not, my hand—the name appears
- “ Already written—wash it out, my tears !”

The picture she draws of the Convent is finely painted, and her own despondent condition in that dreary scene of confinement, is described in the most moving accents.

- “ Relentless walls ! whose darksome round con-
- “ tains
- “ Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains :
- “ Ye

“ Ye rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn ;
 “ Ye grotts and caverns shagg’d with horrid thorn !
 “ Shrines ! where their vigils pale-ey’d virgins
 “ keep,
 “ And pitying faints, whose statues learn to weep !
 “ Tho’ cold like you, unmov’d and silent grown,
 “ I have not yet forgot myself to stone*.”

The various emotions she feels on opening Abelard’s Letters, and on meeting with her own, are feelingly expressed ; and the deplorable fate of those reluctant victims, who are destined to bid adieu to the world, before their hearts are weaned from the prospect of its pleasures, is strongly imaged in the following plaintive exclamation.

“ Now warm in love, now with’ring in my bloom,
 “ Lost in a convent’s solitary gloom !”

But such is the enthusiasm of her love, that notwithstanding all the painful sensations which the perusal of Abelard’s letters occasions her, she yet desires him to write.

“ Yet write, oh write me all ! that I may join
 “ Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.”

This naturally leads her to an admirable digression, in which she breaks forth in praise of the delightful advantages arising from epistolary correspondence ;—with a fond partiality, expressive of her character and situation, she extols the use of letters as they serve amorous purposes only, and supposes them to have been the gift of heaven.

* The learned reader will probably recollect that this beautiful thought is borrowed from Milton, in his *Il Penseroso*, where, in his invocation to Melancholy, he says—“ Forget thyself to marble.”

“ Heav’n

- " Heav'n first taught Letters for some wretch's
 " aid,
 " Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid ;
 " They live, they speak, they breathe what Love
 " inspires,
 " Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,
 " The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
 " Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,
 " Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
 " And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole."

From these beautiful encomiums on the pleasures of epistolary intercourse, she makes a natural transition, and expatiates on the more keen and sensible delights of personal communication ; which she paints with all the warm and rapturous glow of the most amorous imagination.

The first dawn of her passion is not only artfully introduced, but its progress traced from principles which could only influence one of nice sensations and delicate sentiments : she describes the early impressions which Abelard, her comely and graceful preceptor, made upon her mind, with an enthusiasm which is exquisitely affecting, poetical and sublime.

- " Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,
 " When Love approach'd me under friendship's
 " name ;
 " My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,
 " Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.
 " Those smiling eyes, attemp'ring ev'ry ray,
 " Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.
 " Guiltless I gaz'd, heav'n listen'd while you
 " sung ;
 " And truths divine came mended from that
 " tongue."

She then gives a loose to the wantonness of amorous fancy, and avows the unrestrained licence of her love, in the most extravagant and passionate description.

" How

"How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I
 "said,
 "Curse on all laws but those which Love has
 "made?
 "Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
 "Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies."

* * * * *

"Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
 "Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em
 "all:
 "Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;
 "No, make me mistress to the man I love;
 "If there be yet another name more free,
 "More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!
 "Oh! happy state! when souls each other draw,
 "When love is liberty, and nature, law."

She then indulges herself in the recollection that Abelard and she were once in this happy state, on which she expatiates with exquisite fondness and sensibility: but from these scenes of rapture, her mind is suddenly recalled, and turned to the horrid change which her lover's cruel fate has induced.

"Alas! how chang'd! what sudden horrors rise!
 "A naked Lover bound and bleeding lies!
 "Where, where was Eloise? her voice, her
 "hand!
 "Her poniard had oppos'd the dire command.
 "Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain;
 "The crime was common, common be the pain."

It is impossible to read these pathetic lines, without admiring the oblique and delicate allusions with which she glances at the nature of her lover's deplorable disaster. The lively emotions, the sudden starts of passion, the broken hints which rage dictates, and shame suppresses, all conspire to awaken the reader's sympathy,

sympathy, and to place the horror of the scene alluded to, in the most affecting point of view.

From this scene of woe, her recollection is led to another scarce less dismal: And, in the most moving strain of lamentation, she reminds Abelard of the sacrifice they made at the foot of the altar; and of the dreadful omens which attended the celebration of those awful rites.

- “ Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,
 “ When victims at yon altar’s foot we lay?
 “ Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,
 “ When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?
 “ As with *cold* lips I kiss’d the sacred veil,
 “ The shrines all *trembled*, and the lamps grew
 “ *pale*.”

In the two last lines particularly, there is scarce a single epithet which is not happily appropriated, and has not a peculiar beauty and force. Her kissing the veil with *cold* lips, strongly marks her want of that fervent zeal and devotion, which should influence those votaries, who renounce the world. The prefaces likewise which attended the rites, are finely imagined. The trembling of the shrines, the pallid hue of the lamps, as if they were conscious of the reluctant sacrifice the votaries were making, are instances of a strong poetical fancy, judiciously displayed in the choice of the most apposite and striking imagery.

These circumstances likewise are premised with great address and singular propriety, to introduce the confession she afterwards makes, that in the midst of this solemn scene, her fondness for Abelard prevailed over every other idea.

- “ Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,
 “ Not on the *Cross* my eyes were fix’d, but *you*.”

Her

Her passion then swelling in a full tide of amorous transport, breaks forth in the following rapturous invocations.

- “ Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my
 “ woe;
 “ Those *still at least* are left thee to bestow;
 “ Still on that breast enamour’d let me lie,
 “ Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,
 “ Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press’d;
 “ Give all thou canst—and let me dream the rest.”

Perhaps the excess of amorous fondness never was expressed with a greater degree of sensibility and delicacy. With what passionate regret and despair, yet with what becoming modesty, she repeatedly hints at her lover’s irreparable misfortune.

Having exhausted every source of fond sentiment in this violent gust of amorous passion, she is naturally recalled to a sense of her present condition, and, by a beautiful transition, suddenly checks the extravagance of her raptures.

- “ Ah no! instruct me other joys to prize,
 “ With other beauties charm my partial eyes,
 “ Full in my view set all the bright abode,
 “ And make my soul quit Abelard for God.”

This devout cast of mind, turns her thoughts towards monastic objects: and recollecting that her Abelard was the founder of the monastery, she intreats him at least to visit his flock. This circumstance of his being the founder of the monastery, affords room for some very just and pathetic reflections, in which such donations as are extorted by priestly artifice, and benefactions bequeathed through fear, to avert the justice of offended heaven, are keenly satirized in the following beautiful lines, of which the second presents the most lively and poetical imagery.

" No weeping orphan saw his father's stores
 " *Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors ;*
 " No silver faints, by dying misers giv'n,
 " Here brib'd the rage of ill requited heav'n:
 " But such plain roofs as piety could raise,
 " And only vocal with the Maker's praise."

There is great address in thus artfully introducing moral sentiments in the midst of pure description, which seize the mind as it were by surprize, and make a more forcible impression, than a professed and direct application.

But the power of description was, perhaps, never carried higher than in the lines which immediately follow, wherein the gloom of the convent is thrown into such awful shades, that every appropriated epithet impresses the mind with a solemn, yet not unpleasing sadness.

" In these *lone* walls (their days eternal bound)
 " The *moss-grown* domes with *spiry* turrets
 " crown'd,
 " Where *awful* arches make a noon-day night,
 " And the *dim* windows shed a *solemn* light,
 " Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray."

She then laments in the most plaintive strains, that his presence being wanting to brighten this gloomy scene, every object wears a mournful aspect, and that she is wholly unsusceptible of the few pensive pleasures, which are calculated to sooth the mind of a recluse.

" The *darksome* pines that o'er yon rocks reclin'd
 " *Wave* high, and *murmur* to the *hollow* wind,
 " The wap'd'ring streams that shine between the
 " hills,
 " The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,
 " The *dying gales* that *pant* upon the trees,
 " The lakes that *quiver* to the curling breeze ;
 " No

“ No more these scenes my meditation aid,
 “ Or lull to rest the visionary maid.”

Nothing can be more delightfully picturesque than this description: there is no reading it without being, in some degree, disposed to relish these solitary and contemplative enjoyments.

But this solemn scene of pensive pleasing meditation, is suddenly contrasted by a most beautiful and striking personification of MELANCHOLY, whose baneful influence and effect are so affectingly described, that a reader of any sensibility feels a gloom gradually diffuse itself over his mind.

“ But o’er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
 “ Long-sounding isles, and intermingled graves,
 “ Black MELANCHOLY sits, and round her
 “ *throws*
 “ A death-like silence, and a dread repose:
 “ Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
 “ Shades ev’ry flow’r, and darkens ev’ry green,
 “ Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
 “ And *breathes a browner horror* on the woods.”

It is candidly and justly observed by the essayist so often mentioned, that the figurative expressions, *throws*, *breathes*, and *browner horror*, are some of the strongest and boldest in the English language.

The image of the goddess MELANCHOLY, who sits brooding over the convent, and throwing a contagious horror on every object around her, is boldly conceived, and expressed with great poetical enthusiasm and sublimity.

At the same time impartiality obliges me to observe that even in this description, excellent as it is, there seems to be a faulty anti-climax. For, after having represented MELANCHOLY, as throwing round her—

“ A death-like silence, and a dread repose,”

it is surely lowering the idea greatly, to add, in the very next line, that——

“ Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene.”

Having painted this scene of horror, Eloisa very naturally laments that she is doomed to stay there for ever, and that death alone can release her: nay, that even after death, her remains must abide there.

“ And here, ev’n then, shall my cold dust remain,
“ Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,
“ *And wait till ’tis no sin to mix with thine.*”

I have often wondered how this last line could steal into this excellent poem, which is so remarkable for harmonious versification. Though there is a pathos and delicacy of *sentiment* conveyed in this line, yet there is nothing like poetry in it. It is, in truth, absolutely flat and prosaic: but it is, perhaps, the only bad verse in the whole poem.

The idea of mingling her ashes with Abelard, raises a tumult of conflicting passions, which divide and distract her soul: One while she breathes all the devotion of a vestal; then again she gives a loose to all the fondness of a woman.

“ Ah wretch! believ’d the spouse of God in vain,
“ Confess’d within the slave of love and man.
“ Assist me, heav’n! but whence arose that pray’r?
“ Sprung it from piety, or from despair?”

There is great beauty in this self-interrogation, respecting the opposite motives of her prayer, which are very nicely distinguished: and she continues to recount the various emotions by which she is alternately agitated——

“ I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;
“ I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;

“ Now

* * * * *

" Now turn'd to heav'n, I weep my past offence,
 " Now think of thee, and curse my innocence."

Conscious of the difficulty of composing such various perturbations, she thus exclaims —

" Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,
 " How often must it love, how often hate!
 " How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
 " Conceal, disdain,—do all things but forget."

Then in a bold sublime strain, she breaks forth into a kind of sacred rapture.

" But let heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd;
 " Not touch'd, but rapt; not waken'd, but in-
 " spir'd!"

In this fit of enthusiasm, she calls on Abelard to aid her devotion.

" Oh come! oh teach me nature to subdue,
 " Renounce my love, my life, myself—and you.
 " Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he
 " Alone can rival, can succeed to thee."

This glowing spirit of devout zeal, likewise reminds her of the different lot of the blameless vestal, whose spotless mind is not agitated by the passionate perturbations of guilt. She describes the equanimity, the composure, the pure and tranquil delights which such an one enjoys, in a strain which is poetical, even to enchantment.

" Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
 " And whispering Angels prompt her golden
 " dreams.

- " For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
 " And wings of Seraphs shed divine perfumes,
 " For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,
 " For her white virgins Hymenæals sing,
 " To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
 " And melts in visions of eternal day."

This pure seraphic bliss, which none but an immaculate vestal can taste, is finely contrasted by the following sudden transition, which describes her own criminal and perturbate state.

- " Far other dreams my erring soul employ,
 " Far other raptures of unholy joy:
 " When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,
 " Fancy restores what *Vengeance* snatch'd away.
 " Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
 " All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee."

Here again she obliquely and modestly hints at her lover's misfortune, which seems, as it were, to increase the eagerness of her passion, which is still more forcibly expressed in the following lines.

- " Oh curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night!
 " How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!
 " Provoking Dæmons all restraint remove,
 " And stir within me ev'ry source of love."

Then, as if spent with the rage of agonizing passion, she calmly reflects on the different situation of her lover, and, with peculiar delicacy, again distantly alludes to the misfortune, which created the difference she describes.

- " For thee the Fates, severely kind, ordain
 " A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain;
 " Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose;
 " No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows."

The following similes, by which this still state of dispassionate repose is illustrated, are highly beautiful and poetical.

- “ Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,
 “ Or moving spirit bade the waters flow ;
 “ Soft as the slumbers of a faint forgiv’n,
 “ And mild as op’ning gleams of promis’d heav’n.”

These admirable lines breathe such a reconciling spirit of composure, attempered with mild devotion, as gradually prepare her to sink into a corresponding habit of mind. Her emotions appear less violent. She calmly calls upon her Abelard, and once more chastely glancing at his lamentable fate, she upbraids herself for indulging the idea of a fruitless unavailing fondness, in the following beautiful breaks of declining passion.

- “ Come, Abelard ! for what hast thou to dread ?
 “ The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
 “ Nature stands check’d ; Religion disapproves ;
 “ Ev’n thou art cold—yet Eloisa loves.”

Still, however, she complains tenderly, though not so passionately, that her lover’s image steals between her and her devotion : and particularly that she fondly recollects the enchantment of his *voice*, which, it seems, was one of Abelard’s peculiar excellencies.

- “ Thy Voice I seem in ev’ry hymn to hear,
 “ With ev’ry bead I drop too soft a tear.”

Then follows a noble and sublime description of some of the circumstances attending the celebration of high mass.

- “ When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,
 “ And swelling organs lift the rising soul,

" One thought of thee puts all the pomp to
 " flight,
 " Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight:
 " In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,
 " While Altars blaze, and Angels tremble
 " round *."

She then disposes herself to pious resignation, and by a fond *menace*, *indirectly* warns her lover, no longer to intervene between her and the dawning grace which is just opening on her soul.

" While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,
 " Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,
 " While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,
 " And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul:
 " Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!
 " Oppose thyself to heav'n; dispute my heart;
 " Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes,
 " Blot out each bright Idea of the skies;
 " Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those
 " tears;
 " Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs:
 " Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode;
 " Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God †!"

In

* It is well observed by the essayist, that few persons have ever been present at the celebrating a mass in a good choir, without being extremely affected with awe, if not with devotion; which ought to put us on our guard, against the insinuating nature of so pompous and alluring a religion as popery. He likewise mentions an anecdote concerning Lord Bolingbroke, which deserves to be repeated. His Lordship being one day present at this solemnity at the chapel of Versailles, and seeing the archbishop of Paris elevate the host, whispered his companion, the Marquis de **** "If I were king of France, I would always perform this ceremony myself."

† I cannot help thinking that the essayist has totally mistaken the poet's meaning in the foregoing lines, from whence he supposes that Eloisa acknowledges the weakness of her religious efforts, and gives herself up to the prevalence of her passions. Far otherwise—It is scarce to be presumed, that in this *declining* stage of her passion, she should so desperately abandon herself

In the next lines she *directly* commands him to fly from her, and bids adieu to his memory.

- “ No, fly me, fly me, far as Pole from Pole ;
 “ Rise Alps between us ! and whole oceans roll !
 “ Ah ! come not, write not, think not once of
 “ me,
 “ Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee !
 “ Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign ;
 “ Forget, renounce me, hate whate’er was mine.”

She then welcomes grace and virtue, in a strain of devout enthusiasm, which is beautifully poetical.

- “ Oh Grace serene ! oh virtue heav’nly fair !
 “ Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care !
 “ Fresh blooming hope, gay daughter of the sky !
 “ And Faith, our early immortality !
 “ Enter, each mild, each amicable guest ;
 “ Receive, and wrap me, in eternal rest !”

The poet shews great skill and address in thus making the violence of her passion subside, and give way by degrees to the ascendancy of religious zeal. Having brought her to such a temper of resignation, that she is prepared for eternity, an awful circumstance is next introduced, more firmly to reconcile her to her destiny. She describes herself as stretched on a tomb, and fancies that she hears a spirit call to her in each low wind. The imagery of this solemn scene is strongly conceived, and poetically expressed.

herself as seriously to call on Abelard to assist the Fiends, and tear her from her God. On the contrary, she describes grace dawning on her soul, and defies her lover, charming as he is, to interrupt the progress of her rising devotion : The whole passage is penned in a stile of indirect menace, not of absolute despair. *Come, if thou dar’st*, signifies, come, if thou be’st so abandoned ;—and the insinuation of the whole is, that if Abelard should be so wicked to assist the Fiends, she was lost, notwithstanding this temporary conquest.

" Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
 " From yonder shrine I heard a solemn sound,
 " Come, Sister, come! (it said, or seem'd to say)
 " Thy place is here, sad Sister, come away!
 " Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd;
 " Love's victim then, tho' now a fainted maid:
 " But all is calm in this eternal sleep;
 " Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep,
 " Ev'n *Superstition* loses every fear:
 " For God, not man, absolves our frailties here *."

This is beyond all encomium in a poem where every line obliges us to pay our warmest tribute of applause.

At the fancied call of this aerial sympathetic sister, Eloisa starts in a kind of religious rapture, and seems eagerly to hasten towards this scene of pure and everlasting bliss, which is poetically pictured.

" I come! I come, prepare your roseate bow'rs,
 " Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flow'rs.
 " Thither, where *sinners* may have rest, I go,
 " Where *flames refin'd* in breasts seraphic glow."

She then calls on Abelard, to perform the last offices, and smooth her passage to these bright abodes. There is something inexpressibly moving in the last marks of her expiring fondness—

" See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,
 " *Suck* my last breath, and *catch* my flying soul!"

But suddenly recollecting herself, she wishes him to attend her in a character less passionate, and rather to perform the duties of his holy function, in her dying moments.

* The two last lines afford a striking instance, that a man of strong sense and sound judgment, cannot be a bigot in *any religion*: not even in *that* which has bigotry for its principle.

" Ah

" Ah no—in sacred vestments may'st thou stand,
 " The hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,
 " Present the cross before my *lifted* eye,
 " Teach me at once, and learn of me to die."

Then in a sudden and most pathetic transition she calls on Abelard to take the last parting look of her, even in the agonies of death.

" Ah then, thy once-lov'd Eloisa see!
 " It will be then *no crime* to gaze on me.
 " See from my cheek the transient roses fly!
 " See the *last sparkle languish* in my eye!"

I will venture to say that a man who can read these lines with unshaken nerves, has not a grain of sensibility in his composition.

She does not yet, however, relinquish the idea of Abelard; her fondness for him extends itself beyond the grave, and is expressed in the most affecting and poetical strain.

" In trance ecstatic may thy pangs be drown'd,
 " Bright clouds descend, and Angels watch thee
 " round,
 " From op'ning skies may streaming glories shine,
 " And Saints embrace thee with a love like mine."

She lastly wishes * that they may be buried in one grave; and presuming that two wandering lovers may, ages hence, chance to gaze on their tomb in the Paraclete; she supposes, that, touched with mutual pity, they may make the following tender exclamation:

" Oh may we never love as these have lov'd!"

* This wish was fulfilled. The body of Abelard, who died twenty years before Eloisa, was sent to her, and interred in the Monastery of the Paraclete.

To

To carry the circumstance of commiseration still higher, she imagines, that even a casual glance at their tomb, will affect the beholders with such involuntary pity, as even to check their fervour in the act of devotion.

- “ From the full choir when loud Hosannas rise,
 “ And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,
 “ Amidst that scene if some relenting eye
 “ Glance on the stone where our cold relicks lie,
 “ Devotion’s self shall steal a thought from heav’n,
 “ One human tear shall drop, and be forgiv’n*.”

Nothing can be more finely imagined than these lines, nor more expressive of the tender sympathy which must be excited in every feeling breast on recollecting the deplorable fate of this unhappy pair †.

Upon the whole, it is not, perhaps, too much to say, that it is not in the power of language to describe the various tumults of conflicting passions with greater energy and pathos; the opposite sentiments, which agitate the soul of Eloisa, are marked by such natural and masterly transitions, that the mind of the reader is irresistibly attracted, and sympathizes with her in every alternate change of passion. It may be truly said,

- “ ————— *Pectus inaniter angit,*
 “ *Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,*
 “ *Ut magus* —————

* Here again the essayist seems to have misunderstood the poet’s meaning. For he apprehends the lines above quoted to be descriptive of the behaviour of the two lovers; whereas they seem to point out the more striking effect, which the accidental view of their tomb would have even on the congregation, during the time of divine service.

† I agree, however, with the essayist, that with these six lines the poem should have ended; for the eight additional verses are comparatively languid and flat, and diminish the pathos of the foregoing sentiments.

The poet, in this epistle, displays an accurate knowledge of human nature. He appears to have been thoroughly acquainted with the secret workings of the heart, and the force and influence of the various emotions which contending passions produce *.

Nevertheless, with all its poetical merit, it is much to be feared that it has done no service to the cause of virtue; which it certainly never was the worthy poet's intention to injure. Though, taken all together, the piece conveys a most excellent moral, by shewing the lamentable distress which attends the indulgence of sensual appetite, and that religion alone has power to assuage and compose the perturbation it creates; yet, at the same time it is to be apprehended, that the exquisite painting and animating descriptions of licentious passion, which abound in detached parts of this epistle, have too frequently made fatal impressions on persons of warm temperament, and of light reflection. The glowing lines which express the extravagance of Eloisa's fondness, her contempt of conjugal ties, and the unbounded freedom of her attachment, have been often repeated with too much success by artful libertines to forward the purposes of seduction, and have as often, perhaps, been remembered by the deluded fair, and deemed a sanction for illicit deviations from the paths of virtue.

Soon after this celebrated epistle, Mr. POPE wrote his *Temple of Fame*, which, agreeably to his usual practice, he kept in his study for two years before it was published.

* Our poet, with all his genius, had never yet been able to give that supreme perfection to the strains of this poem, had he not been early conversant amongst the books in his mother's closet, with those tracts of mystical devotion which so much charm the female mind when religion turns its strongest passion upon *love celestial*. And there being but one way of expressing rapturous emotions, whether the object be earthly or heavenly, the imagination, which only is employed in these meditations, soars on the wings of poetry. So that our young poet could not but be much taken with this kind of reading: And, in fact, the best of the mystic writers had a place in his library amongst the bards.

Nor

Nor did he then venture to make it public, till it had received the approbation of two critical judges, Mr. Steele and Mr. Addison, being, as he says himself, afraid of nothing so much as to impose any thing on the world unworthy of its acceptance. Having sent a copy of it to the former, he received the following answer:

"I have read your *Temple of Fame* twice, and cannot find any thing amiss, of weight enough to call a fault, but see in it a thousand beauties. Mr. Addison shall see it to-morrow; after his refusal of it, I will let you know his thoughts."

After it was published, he presented it to a lady; accompanied with a letter which, if we may judge from the conclusion, appears to have been penned in a very jocular mood.

"Now I talk of Fame, I send you my *Temple of Fame*, which is just come out: but my sentiments about it you will see better by this epigram."

"What's Fame with men, by custom of the
"nation

"Is call'd in women only reputation,

"About them both, why keep we such a pother?

"Part you with one, and I'll renounce the
"other."

This piece is taken from Chaucer's *House of Fame*. The design, however, is in a manner entirely altered, the descriptions and most of the particular thoughts being Mr. POPE's; yet he was too candid to suffer it to be printed without making due acknowledgment. The reader who would compare it with Chaucer, must begin with his third book of *Fame*, there being nothing in the two first books that answers to their title. Though this poem is by no means the most interesting of Mr. POPE's works, nor of the most harmonious versification, yet there are several passages in it highly beautiful, both with respect to sentiment and poetry.

His

His description of the centre of the Temple is finely imagined. Six pompous columns are represented aspiring above the rest around the shrine of Fame, on which are placed the greatest names in learning of all antiquity. These are described in attitudes expressive of their different characters, and the columns on which they are raised, are adorned with sculptures, taken from the most striking subjects of their works; which sculpture, in its manner and character, bears a resemblance to the manner and character of their writings.

Amongst these literary chiefs, Homer stands eminently distinguished, and it is observable that our Poet never speaks of him but with a kind of grateful enthusiasm.

- “ High on the first, the mighty Homer shone;
 “ Eternal adamant compos’d his throne;
 “ Father of verse! in holy fillets drest,
 “ His silver beard wav’d gently o’er his breast;
 “ Tho’ blind, a boldness in his look appears;
 “ In years he seem’d, but not impair’d by years.
 “ The wars of Troy were round the Pillar seen:
 “ Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian
 Queen;
 “ Here Hector glorious from Patroclus’ fall,
 “ Here dragg’d in triumph round the Trojan wall:
 “ Motion and life did ev’ry part inspire,
 “ Bold was the work, and prov’d the master’s fire;
 “ A strong expression most he seem’d t’ affect,
 “ And here and there disclos’d a brave neglect.”

The nice strokes likewise, by which he marks the column appropriated to Virgil, are very beautiful and characteristic.

- “ Finish’d the whole, and labour’d ev’ry part,
 “ With patient touches of unweary’d art:
 “ The *Mantuan* there in sober triumph sat,
 “ Compos’d his posture, and his looks sedate;
 “ On

“ On Homer still he fix’d a rev’rend eye,
 “ Great without pride, in modest Majesty.”

Pindar, Horace, Aristotle and Tully are likewise finely characterized. But the beauty of description is the least merit of this little piece ; it contains a great deal of good sense and poignant satire : Particularly in that part where the suppliants prefer their petitions to the goddesses. Having first introduced the learned, then the good and just, &c. the warlike scourges of mankind next advance, and are treated with a just contempt.

“ A troop came next, who crowns and armour
 “ wore,
 “ And proud defiance in their looks they bore :
 “ For thee (they cry’d) amidst alarms and strife,
 “ We sail’d in tempests down the stream of life ;
 “ For thee whole nations fill’d with flames and
 “ blood,
 “ And swam to empire thro’ the purple flood.
 “ Those ills we dar’d, thy inspiration own,
 “ What virtue seem’d, was done for thee alone.
 “ Ambitious fools ! (the Queen reply’d, and
 “ frown’d)
 “ Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown’d ;
 “ There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,
 “ Your statues moulder’d, and your names un-
 “ known !
 “ A sudden cloud straight snatch’d them from my
 “ fight,
 “ And each majestic phantom sunk in night.”

By way of contrast to these, the plain men of modest worth succeed, and their merit is placed in so amiable a light, that it is impossible not to be in love with their character.

“ Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen ;
 “ Plain was their dress, and modest was their mien.
 “ Great

- " Great idol of mankind ! we neither claim
 " The praise of merit, nor aspire to Fame !
 " But safe in deserts from th' applause of men,
 " Would die unheard of, as we liv'd unseen,
 " 'Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight
 " Those acts of goodness, which themselves re-
 " quite.
 " O let us still the secret joy partake,
 " To follow virtue ev'n for virtue's sake."

The answer of the goddess conveys an excellent moral.

- " And live there men, who slight immortal fame ?
 " Who then with incense shall adore our name ?
 " But mortals ! know, 'tis still our greatest pride
 " To blaze those virtues, which the good would
 " hide.
 " Rise ! Muses, rise ! add all your tuneful breath,
 " These must not sleep in darkness and in death.
 " She said : in air the trembling music floats,
 " And on the winds triumphant swell the notes ;
 " So soft, tho' high, so loud, and yet so clear,
 " Ev'n list'ning Angels lean'd from heav'n to hear."

It is hard to say which is most to be admired, the good sense, or pleasing harmony of these lines. Of which the last in particular is highly poetical, and presents the most striking and agreeable image.

The last of the train of suppliants are stigmatized with that just and noble indignation, which every honest and generous mind bears against the professors of *Machiavelian* policy.

- " Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs done,
 " Enslave their country, or usurp a throne ;
 " Or who their glory's dire foundation laid
 " On sovereigns ruin'd, or on friends betray'd ;
 " Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith could
 " fix,
 " Of crooked counsels and dark politics."

From

From the Temple of Fame, the scene changes to that of rumour, of which the description is beautifully picturesque. The effects arising from the various sounds are illustrated by a simile so happily imagined, and expressed in such melodious versification, that no reader of taste will be tired with the length of it.

- " As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes*
 " The sinking stone at first a circle makes ;
 " The trembling surface by the motion stirr'd,
 " Spreads in a second circle, then a third ;
 " Wide, and more wide, the floating rings ad-
 " vance :
 " Fill all the wat'ry plain, and to the margin
 " dance :
 " Thus ev'ry voice and sound, when first they
 " break,
 " On neighb'ring air a soft impression make ;
 " Another ambient circle then they move ;
 " That, in its turn, impels the next above ;
 " Thro' undulating air the sounds are sent,
 " And spread o'er all the fluid element."

With respect to the other translations, and imitations, which follow in this volume, such as *January and May*, *The Wife of Bath*, &c. they are too inconsiderable for a critical analysis. These ludicrous pieces, however, serve to shew the universality of Mr. POPE's genius, being penned with all the ease, gaiety, and vivacity suitable to the levity of the subjects, and the years of the author. Most of the *translations* were but a sort of *exercises*, while he was improving himself in the languages, and carried by his early bent to poetry, to perform them rather in verse than prose.

Of these the most observable is the translation of the first book of the *Thebais* of Statius, which was

* The reader will recollect the same simile in Addison's *Cato*.

done when the author was but fourteen, and affords nothing very striking. Indeed the subject seems to have been ill chosen: it is one of those which become more disagreeable, the better they are executed: being calculated rather to inspire horror, than pity; and whatever excites horror, should be banished from poetry. There is no reading the execration of Oedipus against his children, nor many other parts of this piece, without shuddering with horror. Indeed Statius, as POPE observes, though one of the best versifiers, next to Virgil, was none of the discreetest poets, and our author has pointed out several gross faults in composition, which, even at this early age, did not escape the correctness of his judgment.

The *Imitations* likewise, were some of them done so early as at the age of fourteen or fifteen, but having got into miscellanies, they were added to complete this juvenile volume.

Nevertheless, some of these looser compositions it is to be feared have more admirers than his graver pieces, being adapted to entertain the herd of readers, whose ideas seldom extend *ultra Cingulum*.

Our author, before the publication of his *Temple of Fame*, had made a considerable progress in his translation of Homer's *Iliad*, as may be collected from a passage in the letter above taken notice of, to the Lady whom he presented with his *Temple of Fame*.

He had once formed a design of giving a taste of all the celebrated Greek poets, by translating one of the best short pieces from each of them, which he would have executed, had he not engaged in this translation; and he has often ingenuously confessed that he undertook this work, which was so much more laborious, solely with a view to profit, being then so destitute of money, that he had not sufficient to purchase the books he had occasion for. Lord Oxford it seems always discouraged this undertaking, and used to compliment our author, by saying that so good a writer ought not to be a translator.

In

In 1713, he circulated propofals for publishing this translation by fubfcription. He had been long importuned to engage in this undertaking, by feveral of his friends, particularly Sir William Trumbull*, and he no fooner refolved on the attempt, which he began about the age of twenty-five, than he profecuted it with great ardour and afiiduity.

He was fo anxious during the time he was employed about it, that it not only occupied his thoughts by day, but was fo much the fubject of his dreams by night, that he often imagined himfelf travelling a long journey, and that he fhould never arrive at the end of the road.

His folitude to preferve the reputation he had acquired, made him attentive to every circumftance which might render his translation more perfect. With this view, he voluntarily enlarged his defign, by adding to it many curious and valuable notes †: and being under a neceffity of confulting a great number of authors, a little before the death of Queen Anne, he made a journey to Oxford, where he had recourfe to the books in the Bodleian, and other libraries in that univerfity.

He was not more than five years in translating the Iliad, of which the greater part was written with vaft rapidity, and no inconfiderable portion of it compofed as he paffed along the road: for a genius very often is leaft idle, when he feems moft fo ‡.

In

* Lord Landfdown likewife encouraged our author to purfue his defign, as appears from one of his letters, dated 21ft October 1713.

“ I am pleafed beyond meafure with your defign of translating Homer. The trials which you have already made and published on fome parts of that author, have fhewn that you are equal to fo great a task; and you may therefore depend upon the utmoft fervices I can do in promoting this work, or any thing that may be for your fervice.”

† The notes on the Iliad were written by Mr. Porz; thofe on the Odyffey by Dr. Broome.

‡ The firft manufcript copy is yet in being, and is defigned for fome public library, as of fingular curiofity, being written in

In this translation, and in that of the *Odyssey* which he executed afterwards, he used in general to take advantage of the first glow : afterwards calmly to correct each book by the original ; then to compare it with other translations ; and lastly to give it a reading for the sake of the versification only *.

By the translation of the *Iliad*, which was published for his own benefit, he acquired a considerable fortune, the subscription being so large that it amounted, as it is said, to no less than 6000 *l.* and our author afterwards sold it to Lintot † for 1200 *l.* in money, besides all the books for his subscribers, as well as those he intended for presents ‡.

in the envelopes of letters ; which occasioned Swift's calling him—*Paper-sparing Pope*.

* The foul copy of the *Iliad* was full of corrections, and our author was of opinion that those parts read best, which had been most blotted : The foul copy of the *Odyssey* was not so full of obliterations, which shews that he had by that time attained greater readiness and correctness.

† The project for the translation of Homer's *Iliad* being become a matter of great expectation, the booksellers all put in for the prize : but, as the poet says, on another occasion, though with an eye to this, for he loved to turn what was ridiculous in his own adventures into ridicule,

“ The lofty Lintot in the circle rose,

“ This prize is mine ; who tempt it are my foes.”

Lintot had then no foundation for his *loftiness* : and on that account, perhaps, was tempted to bid most. The terms he offered Mr. POPE were so advantageous, that all the hesitation he had to accept them, was from the apprehension he had that the affair would ruin the bookseller : and therefore, as he told an intimate friend, he honestly, and prudently too, endeavoured to dissuade Lintot from thinking any more of the matter. But the lofty Lintot was not to be so intimidated. He made the bargain and his fortune together. The success of the work was so great, that the bookseller was enriched at once : he purchased considerably, and was made high sheriff of the county where his estates lay.

‡ It may be proper to observe, that all the materials for the *Life* of Homer, which was penned by Dean Parnelle, were collected and classed by Mr. POPE. The composition is stiff, and was much more so, the correction having cost Mr. POPE more trouble than if he had wrote it originally.

Never

Never was a more general encouragement given to any literary undertaking, nor was any translation ever executed with more art, or that abounded with so much poetic fire *. Men of all ranks and parties united in their zeal to promote it, though at the same time it must not be concealed that some secret and invidious attempts were made to detract from our author's merit in the public opinion.

It must give pain to every reader who is a friend to literature, to be told that Mr. Addison on this occasion was capable of so much jealousy, as to descend to the basest arts of rivalry, in order to suppress the rising fame of our author, with whom he associated on terms of friendship and respect; and who had long treated him with uncommon regard.

Our author's friendship with Mr. Addison commenced in 1713. Mr. POPE used to say that he liked him *de bon coeur*, as well as he liked any man, and was very fond of his conversation. In short, their

* In the last edition he himself gave of the translated Iliad, the present Bishop of Gloucester, at his desire, revised and corrected the Preface, and the Essay on Homer, as they now stand. This desire is intimated in the following letter, wherein Mr. POPE, after expressing the warmest wishes to serve his learned and valuable friend, continues thus, —

"But I live in a time when benefits are not in the power of an honest man to bestow: nor indeed of an honest man to receive, considering on what terms they are generally to be had. It is certain you have a full right to any I could do you, who not only monthly, but weekly, of late, have loaded me with favours of that kind, which are most acceptable to veteran authors; those garlands which a commentator weaves to hang about his poet, and which are flowers both of his own gathering and planting too; not blossoms springing from the dry author.

"It is very unreasonable after this, to give you a second trouble in revising the *Essay on Homer*. But I look upon you as one sworn to suffer no errors in me: and though the common way with a commentator be to erect them into beauties, the best office of a critic is to correct and amend them. There being a new edition coming out of Homer, I would willingly render it a little less defective, and the bookseller, will not allow me time to do so myself."

friend-

friendship was cultivated on both sides with all the marks of mutual esteem and affection, and with a constant intercourse of good offices. Thus, when the translation of the *Iliad* was on foot, which was begun in 1713, Mr. Addison expressed the highest * expectations from it, and when first published not only recommended it to the public †, but joined with the *Tories* in promoting the subscription, though, at the same time, as has been intimated, he advised Mr. POPE not to be content with the applause of one *half of the nation*. On the other hand, Mr. POPE made his friend's interest his own, and when Dennis so brutally attacked the tragedy of *Cato*, he wrote the piece intitled, "*A narrative of his madness*."

Mr. POPE likewise, from time to time, communicated to Mr. Addison the progress he made in his translation, and the difficulties which attended it, particularly in a letter to that friend, dated 30th Jan. 1713-14, wherein among other things, he jocularly complains of the envious reports which were propagated to his prejudice.

"Some have said I am not a master in the Greek, who are either so themselves, or are not: if they are not, they cannot tell; and if
"they

* The expectation he formed will best appear from his own words, in his letter to Mr. POPE; speaking of this translation, he says—

"The work you mention will, I dare say, very sufficiently recommend itself when your name appears with the proposals; and if you think I can any way contribute to the forwarding of them, you cannot lay a greater obligation on me than by employing me in such an office. As I have an ambition of having it known that you are my friend, I shall be very proud of shewing it by this or any other instance. I question not but your translation will enrich our tongue, and do honour to our country."

† In the *Freeholder*, he recommends the translation in the following warm terms:

"When I consider myself as a *British Freeholder*, I am in a particular manner pleased with the labours of those who
"have

" they are, they cannot without having catechized me †."

In this state of reciprocal amity they continued, till Mr. POPE's growing reputation, and superior genius in poetry, excited uneasy sentiments in his friend: and then it was that he encouraged Phillips, and others, in their clamours against him as a Tory and a Jacobite, who had even assisted in writing the *Examiners*; and, under an affected care for the government, he endeavoured to conceal, even from himself, the real ground of his distrust. But from the injustice of such an insinuation, the late collection of Swift's Letters is sufficient to acquit Mr. POPE. In truth, so extremely cautious was he not to engage in any political contests, that though Sir Richard Steele had engaged his friendly assistance in a periodical paper called the *Guardian*, yet he discontinued all correspondence of that kind, on Sir Richard's giving a political turn to those papers.

But Mr. Addison's jealousy soon broke out more directly, and discovered itself first to Mr. POPE, and not long after to all the world. The circumstance which first opened Mr. POPE's eyes with regard to his friend's character, was his dissuading him strongly against adding his machinery to the *Rape of the Lock*, which Mr. POPE had no sooner resolved upon, than he communicated his scheme to Mr. Addison, not doubting but that he would be pleased with the improvement. He experienced the mortification nevertheless, of finding his friend receive it coldly,

" have improved our language with the translation of old Greek and Latin authors. The illiterate among our countrymen may learn to judge from *Dryden's Virgil*, of the most perfect epic; and those parts of *Homer*, which have been already published by Mr. Pope, give us reason to think that the *Iliad* will appear in English, with as little disadvantage to that immortal poem."

† Several have since endeavoured to propagate this envious slander in a fairer way, by criticising various passages of the translation; but still their attempts have been attended with the same impotency of malice and folly.

assuring

* Sir
which T
a long
Addison,
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assuring him in a strain of artful adulation, that the poem, in its original state, was a delicious little thing, and as he expressed it, *Merum Sal*. As it was apparent that his objection to so noble a piece of invention, could not be the result of his judgment, Mr. POPE, not without reason, began to entertain suspicions of his sincerity.

It was not long before these suspicions were confirmed; for soon after this a translation of the first book of the Iliad, appeared under the name of Mr. Tickell; which coming out at a critical juncture, when it was publicly known that Mr. POPE was engaged on the same subject, and bearing the name of a dependant of Mr. Addison's, made our author more than suspect him to be privy to this ungenerous attempt: and after a diligent inquiry, and laying many concurring circumstances together, he was fully convinced, that it was not only published with Mr. Addison's participation, but was in truth his own performance *. Not content with this base and invidious attempt, to supplant his friend in the public esteem, he privately made use of all the attention and deference which was paid to himself, as a man of critical learning, to depreciate Mr. POPE's translation; and did not scruple to declare, as Sir Richard Steele told Sir Samuel Garth, that Mr. Tickell's (that is, his own) was the best that had ever been done in any language. He would sometimes likewise say coolly, that both translations were well done, but that Tickell's had more of Homer.

Mr. POPE, in his first resentment of such usage, was resolved to expose this envious rival's version, in a severe critique upon it. The copy he had marked for this purpose now lies before me; in the margin of which, the several faults in translation,

* Sir Richard Steele, in his ninth edition of the *Drummer* (which Tickell had omitted to insert amongst Addison's works) in a long epistle to Congreve, affirms very intelligibly, that Addison, and not Tickell, was the translator of the first book of the Iliad, to which the latter had set his name.

language, and numbers, are classed under their proper heads. The growing splendor however of his own works, so soon eclipsed the faint efforts of this invidious competition, that he declined all thoughts of exposing its weakness and malignity; and, with more becoming dignity, left it to the judgment and justice of the public, who did not fail to treat it with the neglect it deserved, and it has long since been consigned to oblivion *.

Mr. POPE, however, who was naturally irritable, could not avoid being very sensibly affected by Mr. Addison's dark and insidious behaviour: and their common friends were very solicitous to reconcile them under this misunderstanding. Mr. Jervas † in particular,

* Dr. Parnelle, in one of his letters to Mr. POPE, expresses his sentiments, with respect to this rival translation, with great freedom.

"I have seen the first book of Homer, which came out at a time when it could not but appear a kind of setting up against you. My opinion is, that you may, if you please, give them thanks who writ it. Neither the numbers nor the spirit have an equal mastery with yours; but what surprises me more is, that a scholar being concerned, there should happen to be some mistakes in the author's sense; such as putting the light of Pallas's eyes into the eyes of Achilles, making the taunt of Achilles to Agamemnor, (that he should have spoils when Troy should be taken) to be a cool and serious proposal: the translating what you call *ablution* by the word *effals*, and so leaving water out of the rite of lustration, &c."

Dr. Berkeley likewise, Dean of Londonderry, bears testimony to the superior merit of our author's translation, in the following passage:

"———Some days ago, three or four gentlemen, and myself, exerting that right which all readers pretend to over authors, sat in judgment upon the two new translations of the first Iliad. Without partiality to my country-men, I assure you, they all gave the preference where it was due; being unanimously of opinion, that yours was equally just to the sense with Mr. ———'s, and without comparison, more easy, more poetical, and more sublime."

† There appears to have been a very great friendship between this gentleman and Mr. POPE, which subsisted without interruption, till the death of the former, who, in his will, shewed his affectionate remembrance of our author, as

particular, acquainted our author, that in a conversation he had held with Mr. Addison, the latter expressed the highest professions of friendship for Mr. POPE, and assured Mr. Jervas, that notwithstanding many insinuations were spread to keep them at variance, it should not be his fault, if there was not the best understanding and intelligence between them.

To this assurance, Mr. POPE replied with an amiable and forgiving temper, that Mr. Addison was sure of his respects at all times, and of his real friendship, whenever he should think fit to know him for what he was.

Some time after this conversation, our author had an interview with Mr. Addison; at the particular desire of Sir Richard Steele, who was present, as was likewise Mr. Gay. Sir Richard took pains to conciliate them, but Mr. Addison's distant reserve and unbecoming behaviour rendered a reconciliation impracticable. So far from shewing the disposition he professed to Mr. Jervas, he rather betrayed an inclination to widen the breach, and gave offence by many taunting and depreciating expressions, which were uttered with such an affected calmness of temper, as perhaps they only can command, who never glowed with the warmth of generous feelings. Mr. POPE, on the other hand, who had all the sensibility and indignant spirit of a delicate and noble mind, did not fail to return such indecent and offensive treatment, with the severity it deserved:

we learn from a letter he addressed to Mr. Bethel, where he says——

“ A testimony of friendship and good opinion has been left me by an old friend, from whom I had not the least imagination of such a thing, Mr. Jervas; but it takes no effect unless I out-live his widow, which is not very likely: however, I think him absolutely in the right in giving nothing from her, to whom he owed almost every thing; and the sum is considerable, viz. a *thousand pounds*. It is the first legacy I ever had, and I hope I shall never have another at the expence of any man's life, who would think so kindly of me.”

till at length the dispute ran so high, that they parted without any ceremony on either side, and Mr. POPE, while he was yet warm with the provocation he had received, wrote those celebrated lines, in which he has so inimitably drawn Mr. Addison's *character* *.

About this time, Mr. Addison's son-in-law, the Earl of Warwick, told Mr. POPE, that it was in vain to think of continuing upon good terms with a man so naturally jealous as Mr. Addison, who was hurt by Mr. POPE's excelling talents in poetry; and that to such a degree, that he had secretly encouraged Gildon to write something concerning Wycherley, in which he had taken occasion to abuse our author and his family in a virulent manner: and that Mr. Addison had actually paid this base instrument of defamation, the sum of ten guineas as the wages of his scurrility.

Such

* The strokes of this character are so highly finished, that the reader, I am persuaded, will not be displeased with the following transcript.

After speaking of the wretched poetasters of the times, he thus breaks forth—

“ Peace to all such ! but were there one whose fires
 “ True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires;
 “ Blest with each talent and each art to please,
 “ And born to write, converse, and live with ease :
 “ Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
 “ Bear, like the Turk, no rival near the throne,
 “ View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
 “ And hate for arts, that caus'd himself to rise;
 “ Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
 “ And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;
 “ Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
 “ Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;
 “ Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,
 “ A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend ;
 “ Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,
 “ And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd ;
 “ Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
 “ And sit attentive to his own applause ;
 “ While wits and templars ev'ry sentence raise,
 “ And wonder with a foolish face of praise—

“ Who

Such an assurance of Mr. Addison's treachery increased his indignation, but still he preserved a dignity in his resentment, which, while it did honour to himself, must have added to the mortification of his conscious rival. The very next day, he wrote Mr. Addison a letter, wherein he acquainted him that he was no stranger to the illiberality of his behaviour towards him, which, however, he scorned to imitate. That, on the contrary, he would openly, and to his face censure such failings in him as he judged reprehensible; and that he would at the same time do public justice to his merits. He added, that as a proof of this disposition towards him, he had sent him the enclosed; which was the CHARACTER above spoken of, long after published, by Mr. POPE, first, separately, and afterwards inserted in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

It must be observed, that this was not till it had been printed by Curl and the Journalists of those times †; and this just and manly rebuke conveyed in so open and spirited a manner, produced a very good effect; for Mr. Addison from this time to his death, which happened about three years after, always treated Mr. POPE with civility, and, as he believed, with justice.

Besides this covert attack from Mr. Addison, which was most formidable, several other invidious attempts were openly made to decry the merit of this translation. Dennis, Gildon, Welsted, Theobald, &c. rose up against the translator in all the rage of

"Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?"

"Who would not weep, if Atticus were he!"

Atterbury so well understood the force of these lines, that, in one of his letters to Mr. POPE, he says—"Since you now know where your strength lies, I hope you will not suffer that talent to lie unemployed."

† The falsehood propagated in *Mist's Journal*, that this Character was written after Mr. Addison's death, is fully refuted in the Testimonies prefixed to the Dunciad.

criticism. The first wrote against him expressly: and Theobald, after having given the translation the highest character in the *Censor*, afterwards thought proper, in his *Essay on the Art of sinking in Reputation*, to withdraw the encomiums he had passed on it, and to turn his panegyrick into censure. But candour and consistence are not among the attributes of envy and malevolence.

Conscious however, as it should seem, that their single efforts were too weak to check our author's rising fame, several of them joined their forces, and their united malice at length produced a wretched piece of criticism called the *POPIAD*.

These combined critics endeavoured to pick out what they called faults, but in most instances they only exposed their want of learning, taste, and judgment: and their works, with themselves, had been long ago consigned to oblivion, had not our poet taken a pride to collect them as they rose aloft in thin clouds of nonsense, as if to recognize the place of their birth in the moon. These he bound up in Volumes of all sizes, Twelves, Octavos, Quartos and Folios, to which he has prefixed this motto from Job—*Behold my desire is that mine adversary had written a book. Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me.* C. 31. ver. 35. §

Mr. POPE very wisely declined vindicating his writings from such trivial and insignificant objections; he treated them with a becoming and contemptuous silence. It must not be forgotten, however, that our author was so unfortunate to incur the resentment of one, whose sex and learning claimed

§ As these libellers were mostly anonymous, he has to each libel written the name of the composer, with occasional remarks. This portentous collection is still in being. And if any public library or museum, whose search is after curiosities, be desirous of enriching their common treasure with it, it will be freely at the service of that which asks first. It will give light to some parts of the *Dunciad*, whose heroes are unworthy of any light but their own.

a different

a different treatment. Mr. POPE having occasion in his preface, to speak of Madame Dacier, he did not, it seems, mention her with that distinction, which she thought due to her merit, and in truth though Mr. POPE respected the lady's learning very much, yet he did not, as appears by one of his letters to the Duke of Buckingham, think quite so highly of it as the French did; esteeming it great complaisance in that polite nation, to allow her to be a critic of equal rank with her husband †.

This learned lady, piqued at the disregard with which she thought herself treated, took occasion, with great affectation of temper, to object to some of Mr. POPE's sentiments respecting Homer, and likewise to defend herself against a criticism which he made on a passage in her preface, where she gives antient manners the preference above modern.

But notwithstanding she endeavoured to hide, even from herself, the true motives of her criticism, yet they transpired, and flowed from her pen involuntarily in the following confession.

"I own," said she, "I did not expect to find myself attacked by Mr. POPE, in a preface wherein *I might have expected some small token of acknowledgment, or at least some slight approbation.*"

In truth, Mr. POPE does not appear to have behaved with that polite and generous attention towards this fair critic, which her sex and merit demanded: more especially as he confessed to have received great helps from her.

† After pointing out some instances of the Lady's want of critical skill, Mr. POPE adds very politely—"Your Grace will believe me, that I did not search to find defects in a Lady; my employment upon the *Iliad* forced me to see them; yet I have had so much of the French complaisance as to conceal her thefts; for wherever I have found her notes to be wholly another's (which is the case of some hundreds) I have barely quoted the true proprietor, without observing upon it. If Madam Dacier has seen my observations, she will be sensible of this conduct, but what effect it may have upon a Lady, I will not answer."

He afterwards, however, made all the amends in his power. He wrote to her a very genteel and obliging letter, wherein he expressed his concern at having penned any thing to displease so excellent a genius: and she, on the other hand, with an amiable frankness, protested to forget all that had passed: so that these two great admirers and translators of Homer, ever after maintained towards each other the most perfect appearance of esteem and regard.

Having not only increased his fame, but established his fortune by this translation, he found himself in a situation to draw nearer the capital, and live more among his friends. With this view, having sold the little estate at Binfield, he purchased a house at Twickenham, whither he removed, with his father and mother, before the expiration of the year 1715.

This our author calls one of the grand æras of his life, and he took great delight in improving this new situation. The genius he displayed in these improvements was so elegant, that his seat became the resort of all persons of taste and curiosity. One of the chief ornaments of this agreeable retreat, was the grotto, the improvements of which, as his friend and editor assures us, was one of the favourite amusements of his declining years; so that not long before his death, by enlarging and increasing it with a vast number of ores and minerals of the richest and rarest kinds, he made it one of the most elegant and romantic retirements: and in the disposition of these materials, the beauty of his poetic genius appears to as much advantage, as in any of his best contrived poems.

Towards the beautifying of his gardens and grotto, our author was assisted by presents of various kinds, from several of his friends, procured from the various quarters of the globe.

Even his late Highness the Prince of Wales (father of our present sovereign) who was always amiably disposed to do honour to the deserving, condescended to contribute towards embellishing our
author's

author's retreat, as we learn by the following letter.

" Dear Sir,

" Since my last, I have received his Royal Highness's commands to let you know that he has a mind to present you with some urns or vases for your garden, and desires you would write me word what number and size will suit you best. You may have six small ones for your Laurel Circus, or two large ones to terminate points, as you like best. He wants to have your answer soon. ——— Adieu, my dearest friend.

" Yours most affectionately,

" G. Lyttelton."

But, notwithstanding our author took such delight in these improvements, his judgment taught him to regard them with a true philosophic eye. In one of his letters to Mr. Allen, speaking of his gardens and grotto, he says—

" I am at a full stop at present, for a reason that has put many a man to a full stop, the having no more stock to spend; for till I can procure more materials from the mines, and from the quarries, my *mine-adventure*——

" (Like the adventure of the bear and fiddle)

" Must end, and break off in the middle.

" However, it is some satisfaction, that as far as I have gone, I am content; and that is all a mortal man can expect: for no man finishes any view he has, or any scheme he projects, but by halves——

" And life itself can nothing more supply

" Than just to plan our projects, and to die.

“ Those men indeed, who marry and settle, undertake for more; they undertake for future ages. I am content to leave nothing but my works behind me: which (whether good or evil) will follow me, as *St. John* expresses it. As to my *mines* and my *treasures*, they must go together to God knows who! A sugarbaker or a brewer may have the house and gardens, and a booby, that chanced to be my heir at law, the other: except I happen to disperse it to the poor in my own time *.”

In another letter to the same gentleman, speaking of his improvements, he makes the following philosophical reflections:

“ Indeed, I think all my vanities of this sort at an end; and I will excuse them to the connoisseurs, by setting over my door, in conclusion of them, *Parvum parva decent*. I must charge you for encouraging some of them, and others of my friends for encouraging others: but I have had my share too of discouragement and censure from enemies; nevertheless, upon the whole, I neither repent much nor am very proud, but tolerably pleased with them †.”

His

* His yearly charities were very extensive, as the person to whom he wrote this letter well knew and delighted to aid.

† The reader, I trust, will not be displeased with the following description which our author himself gives of this romantic retreat, long before it received the last and principal improvements.

“ I have,” says he, “ put the last hand to my works of this kind, in happily finishing the subterranean way and grotto: I there found a spring of the clearest water, which falls in a perpetual rill, that echoes through the cavern day and night. From the river Thames, you see through my arch up a walk of the wilderness, to a kind of open temple, wholly composed of shells in the rustic manner; and from that distance, under the temple, you look down through a sloping arcade of trees, and see the sails on the river passing suddenly and vanishing, as through a perspective glass. When you shut the doors of this grotto, it becomes

“ on

His father survived this removal only two years, dying suddenly at the age of seventy-five, after a life of health, innocence and tranquillity. He was buried

" on the instant, from a luminous room, a *camera obscura*;
 " on the walls of which all the objects of the river, hills,
 " woods, and boats, are forming a moving picture in their
 " visible radiations: and when you have a mind to light it up,
 " it affords you a very different scene; it is finished with
 " shells, interspersed with pieces of looking-glasses in regular
 " forms; and in the ceiling is a star of the same material, at
 " which, when a lamp (of an orbicular figure of thin alabaster)
 " is hung in the middle, a thousand pointed rays glitter, and
 " are reflected over the place. There are connected to this
 " grotto, by a narrow passage, two porches, one towards the
 " river, of smooth stones full of light, and open; the other
 " toward the garden shadowed with trees, rough with shells,
 " flints, and iron-ore. The bottom is paved with simple
 " pebble, as is also the adjoining walk up the wilderness to
 " the temple, in the natural taste, agreeing not ill with the
 " little dripping murmur, and the aquatic idea of the whole
 " place. It wants nothing to complete it but a good statue
 " with an inscription, like that beautiful antique one which
 " you know I am so fond of:

" *Hujus nympha loci, sacri custodia fontis,*
 " *Dormio, dum blandae sentio murmur aquae.*
 " *Parce meum, quisquis tangis cavo marmora, somnum*
 " *Rumpere; si bibas, sive lavare, tace."*

" Nymph of the grot, these sacred springs I keep,
 " And to the murmurs of these waters sleep;
 " Ah, spare my slumbers, gently tread the cave!
 " And drink in silence, or in silence lave.

" You'll think I have been very poetical in this description,
 " but it is pretty near the truth."

This letter was written in 1725.—He afterwards, when it was in its more perfect state, wrote the following short poem upon it.

" Thou who shalt stop, where Thames' translucent wave
 " Shines a broad Mirror, thro' the shadowy Cave;
 " Where ling'ring drops from min'ral Roofs distill,
 " And pointed Crystals break the sparkling Rill,
 " Unpolish'd Gems no ray on Pride bestow,
 " And latent Metals innocently glow:
 " Approach. Great Nature studiously behold!

" And

buried at Twickenham by his son, whose piety erected a monument to his memory.

His father, however, before he died, enjoyed the heart-felt pleasure of seeing his son the object of public admiration, caressed by the worthy, and dreaded by the worthless: and in the way of making a genteel fortune by the most noble and liberal means, the exercise of his intellectual endowments.

Our author's good fortune, however, did not make him indolent; for in the year 1717, during the time of his being engaged in the translation of Homer, he published a collection of all the poetical pieces he had written before; and in the year 1721, he gave a new edition of *Shakespear*, which has been said not to have answered the expectations of the public.

“ And eye the Mine without a wish for Gold;
 “ Approach: But awful! Lo! th’ Ægerian Grot,
 “ Where, nobly-pensive, ST. JOHN sat and thought;
 “ Where British sighs from dying WYNDHAM stole,
 “ And the bright flame was shot thro’ MARCHMONT’S
 “ Soul.
 “ Let such, such only, tread this sacred Floor,
 “ Who dare to love their Country, and be poor *.”

Our poet's modesty is very conspicuous in these noble verses. He warns an awful approach to his grotto, on account of the reverence due to his *friends*, who sat and thought there: without saying one word of himself. But what renders it truly awful, is its having been the seat of his own study and meditation, which will afford instruction and entertainment to the latest posterity.

* These verses were translated into Latin, and likewise imitated in Greek and Latin.

Mr. Doddsley likewise wrote a copy of verses on this grotto, intitled the *Cave of Pope*, a prophecy. Which is preserved, with other fragments, in a pamphlet, called a Plan of Mr. Pope's Garden, as it was left at his Death, with a Plan and perspective View of the Grotto, all taken by J. Serle, his Gardener.

Nevertheless,

Nevertheless, however, the public may have been extravagantly sanguine in expecting more than was undertaken or intended, or within the power of an editor to perform; yet, certain it is, that this edition of Mr. POPE's has no small share of merit.

His *judgment* was seen in doing what had never been done before, in giving the text from the collated copies of the old editions of the plays. His *taste*, in marking the finest passages with inverted commas; and his *elegance*, in banishing all the poet's and players' ribaldry and nonsense from the text.

The same critics who fell upon this edition for being too scanty, fell upon his friend's edition (which comprized his) for being too full, it supplying what was wanting in the other, by explanatory notes and emendations of the text.

The early editions were little better than one great heap of typographical errors; which made Mr. POPE, who first understood the miserable condition of his author, cry out in the words of Virgil:

“ ——— *Laniatum corpore toto*
 “ *Deiphobum vidi, lacerum crudeliter ora;*
 “ *Ora manusque ambas, populataque tempora rap-*
 “ *tis*
 “ *Auribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere nares.*”

The truth is, that CRITICISM (which Longinus esteemed to be the consummation of human literature) is thought to be the easy task of every willing. What has led them and their readers into this mistake, and will for ever keep them both in it, is the not distinguishing between the *discovery* of corrupted passages, and the *cavilling* at those emendations which are the fruits of it. To discover the corruption of an author's text, and by a happy sagacity to restore it to that sense in which it was first conceived by the author, is no easy matter; but

but when once the discovery is made, to cavil at the amended word, and to support the cavil by another equivalent, is the easy and constant achievement of these doughty Critics. It is the easiest, and at the same time the dullest, of all literary efforts. Yet we have seen editions of this author, in which nothing else has been attempted; and we may now predict, that nothing else will ever be performed by editors who have spent their time and impaired their sight and intellects in collecting and collating the *old quartos*.

Should it be thought, notwithstanding, that our author, as an editor, failed in doing justice to our great dramatic bard; yet, it must be confessed, that he testified a very amiable regard to his memory, by being chiefly instrumental in the erection of the monument in Westminster Abbey, to which he wrote an Inscription that has been censured by critics of the same stamp, as unclassical. Among others, Dr. Mead objected to the Latinity of the expression *amor publicus*, on the authority of Patrick the dictionary-maker; to which POPE well replied,—“That he would allow a dictionary-maker to understand a single word, but not two words put together.”

After the translation of the Iliad was finished, Mr. POPE engaged in the translation of the Odyssey.

The Odyssey was published in the same manner as the Iliad, and sold on the same conditions, except, that instead of *twelve*, he had only *six* hundred pounds for the copy. In this latter work, he was assisted by Broome and Fenton; who, in their turns, were assisted in what they did by Mr. POPE's amendments and corrections throughout. To the first of these he gave 600 *l.* and to the latter 300 *l.* These two gentlemen had formed a design of translating the Odyssey, while Mr. POPE was employed upon the Iliad; and by the time he had finished it, they had gone through several books of the Odyssey, which they desired him to peruse. Mr.

POPE

POPE complied with their request; but at the same time acquainted them that he had entertained the like intentions, and that having made a considerable progress in the execution of them, he would, with their consent, make use of what they had entrusted him with, for the more speedy advancement of the work: and they very readily acceded to a proposition of this nature, from a friend of such superior poetical talents.

Mr. POPE's candid and disinterested conduct, however, did not secure him from the calumny of malevolence; and it was some years afterwards imputed to him, that he sold the labours of others under his own name. To which he calmly replied, with conscious integrity, that it should have been added, "*he had first bought them.*" Mr. Broome, who wrote the notes, gives an account, at the conclusion of them, of his share in the performance.

When the subscription books were compleated, Mr. POPE, as has been intimated, sold the copy to Mr. Lintot, and obtained a patent for his sole printing of it for fourteen years, as he had before done with respect to the *Iliad*. The former patent however was drawn up with such a variation from the latter, as the difference of the case required. In the former, it was recited that he had *undertaken* a translation of the *Odyssey*; in the latter it was said, that he had *translated* the *Iliad*. Mr. Lintot made no objection to this variance in the form of the two patents, but when the sale of the work fell short of the expectations he had formed from the success of the *Iliad*, then he took notice of the difference between them, and complained (in the true spirit of a Bookseller) that Mr. POPE had made use of some management to make him believe that the patents were alike.

Among other malicious insinuations, which were thrown out, by those who maligned Mr. POPE's fame, it was imputed to him in *Mist's Journal*, that having undertaken the *Odyssey*, "and secured the
" success by a numerous subscription, he employed
" some

“ some underling to perform what according to his proposals should come from his own hand.”

But to this injurious charge, it is sufficient to oppose the words of Mr. POPE's printed proposals for the *Odyſſey*.

“ I take this occasion to declare, that the subscription for Shakespeare belongs wholly to Mr. Tonson; and that the future benefit of *THIS Proposal* is not solely for my own use, but for that of two of my friends, who have assisted me in this work.”

The translation of the *Odyſſey* being compleated in the year 1725, he engaged in the following year, in concert with his two ingenious friends Dean Swift and Dr. Arbuthnot, in printing several volumes of Miscellanies. Among these the most conspicuous are the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*; a satire projected by this excellent triumvirate, on the abuses of human learning; and which they proposed to execute in the manner of Cervantes, under a continued narrative of feigned adventures. “ They had observed,” says Mr. POPE's friend and Editor, “ that those abuses still kept their ground, against all that the gravest and ablest authors could say to discredit them; they therefore concluded, that all the force of ridicule was wanting to quicken their disgrace: and as the abuses had been already detected by sober reasoning, ridicule was here very seasonably applied; and truth was in no danger of suffering by the premature use of so powerful an instrument.”

But the separation of our author and his friends, which soon after happened, with the death of one, and the infirmities of the other, put a final period to their design, when they had only drawn out an imperfect essay toward it, under the title of the first *Book of the Memoirs of Scriblerus*.

“ Moral satire,” continues the editor, “ never lost more than in the defeat of this project; in the execution of which, each of this illustrious triumvirate

“virate would have found exercise for his own peculiar talent; besides constant employment for those they all had in common. Dr. Arbuthnot was skilled in every thing which related to *science*: Mr. POPE was a master in the *fine arts*; and Dr. Swift excelled in the *knowledge of the world*. WIT they had all in equal measure, and in a measure so large, that no age perhaps ever produced three men, to whom *Nature* had more bountifully bestowed it, or in whom *Art* had brought it to higher perfection.”

A very pleasant account of this undertaking, and of the share which Dr. Arbuthnot * and Mr. POPE took in it, is to be found in a letter from the former to Dean Swift.

“Pray remember Martin †, who is an innocent fellow, and will not disturb your solitude. The ridicule of medicine is so copious a subject, that I must only here and there touch it. I have made him study physic from the apothecary’s bills, where there is a good plentiful field for the satire upon the present practice. One of his projects was by a stamp upon blistering plaisters and melilot by the yard, to raise money for the government, and to give it to Radcliffe and others to farm. But there was like to be a petition from the inhabitants of London and Westminster, who had no mind to be flead. There was a problem about the doses of purging medicines published four years ago, shewing, that they ought to be in proportion to the

* Mr. POPE used to say, that of all the men he ever met with or heard of, Dr. Arbuthnot had the most prolific wit; and that, in this quality, Swift only held the second place. No adventure of any consequence ever occurred on which the Doctor did not write a pleasant essay, in a great folio paper-book, which used to lie in his parlour. Of these, however, he was so negligent, that while he was writing them at one end, he suffered his children to tear them out at the other, for their paper kites.

† Martinus Scriblerus, of whom POPE, Arbuthnot, and others were to write the Memoirs.

“bulk

“ bulk of the patient ; from thence Martin endeavours to determine the question about the weight of the antient men, by the doses of physick that were given them. One of the best inventions was a map of diseases, for the three cavities of the body, and one for the external parts ; just like the four quarters of the world. Then the great diseases are like capital cities, with their symptoms all like streets and suburbs, with the roads that lead to other diseases. It is thicker set with towns, than any Flanders map you ever saw. Radcliffe is painted at the corner of the map, contending for the universal empire of this world, and the rest of the physicians opposing his ambitious designs, with a project of a treaty of partition to settle peace.

“ There is an excellent subject of ridicule from some of the German physicians, who set up a sensitive Soul, as a sort of a first minister to the rational. Helmont calls him Archæus. Dolæus calls him Microcosmometor. He has under him several other genii, that reside in the particular parts of the body, particularly Prince Cardimelech in the heart ; Gasteronax in the stomach, and the Plastick prince in the organs of generation. I believe I could make you laugh at the explication of distempers from the wars and alliances of those princes ; and how the first minister gets the better of his mistress Anima Rationalis.

“ The best is, that it is making reprisals upon the politicians, who are sure to allegorize all the animal œconomy into state affairs. POPE has been collecting high flights of poetry, which are very good ; they are to be solemn nonsense. I thought upon the following the other day, as I was going into my coach, the dust being troublesome.

“ The dust in smaller particles arose

“ Than those, which fluid bodies do compose :

“ Contraries in extremes do often meet,

“ 'Twas now so dry, that you might call it wet.”

“ I do

" I do not give you these hints to divert you, but
 " that you may have your thoughts, and work upon
 " them."

About this time, in the year 1726, our author narrowly escaped from an accident, which was very near proving fatal to him, as he was returning home from a visit in a friend's chariot, which on passing a bridge happened to be overturned, and thrown with the horses into the river. The glasses were up, and he not able to break them; so that he was in immediate danger of drowning, when the postillion, who had just recovered himself, came to his relief, and after breaking the glass which was uppermost, took him out and carried him to the bank: but a fragment of the broken glass, cut one of his hands so desperately, that he lost the use of two of his fingers.

To this accident he refers in one of his letters to Dean Swift, dated 16th Nov. 1726, where he says;

" My two least fingers on one hand, hang impedi-
 " ments to the others, like useless dependants who
 " only take up room, and never are active or assistant
 " to our wants; I shall never be much the better for
 " them."

Voltaire was at that time in England, and on this occasion sent POPE a consolatory letter; it was written in these very words.

" SIR,

" I hear this moment of your sad adventure. That
 " water you fell in, was not Hippocrene's water,
 " otherwise it would have respected you. Indeed I
 " am concerned beyond expression for the danger you
 " have been in, and more for your wounds. Is it
 " possible that those fingers which have written the
 " Rape of the Lock, and the Criticism, which have
 " dressed Homer so becomingly in an English coat,
 " should have been so barbarously treated. Let the
 " hand of Dennis, or of your poetasters be cut off.
 " Yours is sacred. I hope, Sir, you are now per-
 " fectly recovered, really your accident concerns me

" as

“ as much as all the disasters of a master ought to affect his scholar. I am sincerely, Sir, with the admiration which you deserve,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ In my Lord Bolingbroke’s
“ house, Friday at noon.

“ VOLTAIRE.”

This letter may enable the reader to pass a judgment on that elegant account published at the same time in English, by this ingenious Frenchman *, of the civil wars of France, the subject of his *Henriad*.

Our

* It is much to be lamented that this lively writer, who is so eminent for his literary abilities, should be shamefully deficient in the moral and social virtues. How lightly he regarded the rules of decency, and the dictates of faith and honour, may be collected from the following anecdotes——

Mr. POPE told one of his most intimate friends, that the poet Voltaire had got some recommendation to him when he came to England; and that the first time he saw him was at Twickenham, where he kept him to dinner. Mrs. Pope (a most excellent woman) was then alive; and observing that this stranger, who appeared to be entirely emaciated, had no stomach, she expressed her concern for his want of appetite; on which Voltaire gave so indelicate and brutal an account of the occasion of his disorder, contracted in Italy, that the poor Lady was obliged immediately to rise from table. When Mr. POPE related this, his friend asked him how he could forbear ordering his servant John to thrust Voltaire head and shoulders out of his house: he replied, there was more of ignorance in his conduct, than a purposed affront:——That Voltaire came into England, as other foreigners do, on a prepossession, that not only all religion, but all common decency of morals, was lost amongst us.

Mr. POPE said further, that Voltaire was a spy for the court, while he stayed in England: of which he gave his friend the following instance. When the first *Occasional Letter* to Sir R. Walpole came out (by which circumstance the reader may collect the time of Voltaire’s voyage hither) he made Mr. POPE a visit at Twickenham; and walking with him in his garden, he said, POPE, this *occasional Letter* alarms the court extremely. It is finely written. As you converse much with the best pens conversant in public business, you must know the author. You may

Our author having by his translation of Homer and other works, placed himself in circumstances of affluence, he was now at liberty to follow the true bent of his genius.

The independence of his fortune did not make him negligent of his fame, nor unmindful in the duty which he owed to society, in the application of those talents, which nature had so bountifully bestowed upon him.

His natural benevolence suggested to him, that he could not better serve the interest of society, than, as himself expresses it, by writing a book to bring man-

may safely tell this secret to a stranger, who has no concerns with your national quarrels. Mr. POPE said, he perfectly understood him, as he knew his character: and, to make a trial, which hardly needed any, he replied, "Mr. Voltaire, you are a man of honour; I may safely, I know, trust an important secret to your breast. I myself wrote it." Voltaire, after launching out into high encomiums on the performance, was, he perceived, impatient to get away; and next day he heard, that all the court reported that he was the author. This infamy of the man gave Mr. POPE and his friends much occasion of mirth, and much light in the manner how he ought to be treated. How he was treated ever after by Mr. POPE himself, appears from what passed on Voltaire's coming to take leave of Mr. POPE, on his return to France. After the common compliments had passed, Mr. POPE told his friend that Voltaire took his leave of him in these words, "And now I am come to bid farewell to a man who never treated me seriously from the first hour of my acquaintance with him to this moment."—Mr. POPE said the observation was just, and the reason of his conduct has been given above.

Voltaire, however, constantly paid court to Mr. POPE, and treated him with all the deference and respect due to his merit; though, at the same time, he did not scruple to speak lightly of some of the most eminent writers in this country: particularly of Milton. It is well known, that while this very ingenious and sprightly freethinker was in England, the darling subject of his conversation was Milton; whom he once took occasion to abuse for his Episode of *Death and Sin*. Whereupon a certain wit turned the laugh against him, by the following smart impromptu:

"Thou art so witty, wicked, and so thin,

"Thou serv'st at once for MILTON, DEATH, and SIN."

kind

kind to look upon this life with comfort and pleasure, and put morality in good humour.

With this amiable disposition, he applied his poetical talents to compose the treatise, entitled the *Essay on Man*; in which he enforced the most important moral and religious truths, with all the logical method of argument, and embellished them with all the graces and ornaments of elegant and harmonious composition.

Our author himself, with decent pride, claims the merit of this laudable exertion of his talents, where he says, in his epistle to Arbuthnot —

“ That not in Fancy’s maze he wander’d long,
“ But stoop’d to truth, and moraliz’d his song.”

Which, as the learned Editor remarks, may be said no less in commendation of his *literary* than of his *moral* character.

Mr. POPE’s sagacity soon led him to discover where his superior excellence lay; and, being naturally of a devout and moral cast of mind, he found this work so happily adapted to his genius, that he even complained of its being too easy, as we learn from a letter, addressed by Lord Bolingbroke to Dean Swift, wherein his Lordship says —

“ Bid him (POPE) talk to you of the work he is
“ about: it is a fine one, and will be in his hands
“ an original. His sole complaint is, that he finds it
“ too easy in the execution. This flatters his laziness. It flatters my judgment; who always
“ thought, that *universal* as his talents are, this is
“ eminently and peculiarly his, above all the writers
“ I know, living or dead; I do not except Horace.”

It has been understood that our author engaged in this undertaking by the advice of Lord Bolingbroke; but it is for the honour of Mr. POPE’s memory, to explain how far Lord Bolingbroke was instrumental in the production of this admirable essay: with which explanation we are furnished by the author of the *View of Lord Bolingbroke’s Philosophy*.

Mr.

Mr. POPE has indeed permitted Lord Bolingbroke to be considered by the public, as his *philosopher* and *guide*: and in their conversations respecting the impious complaints against providence, on account of the unequal distribution of things, natural and moral, in the present system, they agreed, that such complaints were most commodiously answered on the Platonic principle of THE BEST.

This encouraged our poet to philosophize, and the fruits of his speculations are to be found in this celebrated Essay; in which, if you will take his Lordship's word, POPE was so far from putting his prose in verse, (as has been invidiously suggested) that he put POPE's verse into prose.

It is observable, that they agreed in the principle, that *whatever is, is right*: and Mr. POPE thought they had agreed in the question to which this principle was to be applied. But time has since shewn that they differed very widely: and, to state this difference with greater fullness and perspicuity, it is proper to consider against whom they write.

Mr. POPE's *Essay on Man* is a real vindication of providence against libertines and atheists; who quarrel with the present constitution of things, and deny a future state. To these he answers, that *whatever is, is right*: and he assigns this reason, that *we see only a part of the moral system, and not the whole*. Therefore these irregularities serving to great purposes, such as the fuller manifestation of God's goodness and justice, they are *right*.

On the other hand, Lord Bolingbroke's essays are a pretended vindication of providence against an imaginary confederacy between *divines* and *atheists*; who use a common principle, namely, the *irregularities of God's moral government here*, for different ends and purposes; the one, to establish a *future state*; the other, to discredit the *being of a God*.

His Lordship, who opposes their different conclusions, endeavours to overthrow their common principle, by his friend's maxim, that *whatever is, is right*; not because the present state of our *moral world*

world (which is part only of a more general system) is necessary for the greater perfection of the whole, but because our *moral world* is an entire system of itself.

His Lordship applies the maxim, no better (as might be expected) than he understands it. Mr. POPE, as has been observed, urges it against atheists and libertines, who say that the constitution of things is faulty; so that the reply, *whatever is, is right*, is pertinent in him. His Lordship, on the other hand, directs it against divines, who say, indeed, that this constitution is imperfect, if considered separately, because it is a part only of a whole, but are as far as his Lordship from calling it *faulty*: therefore the reply, that *whatever is, is right*, is, in him, impertinent.

In a word, the poet directs it against atheists and libertines, in support of religion, properly so called; the philosopher, against divines, in support of religion, improperly so called, namely NATURALISM; and the success is answerable. Mr. POPE's argument is manly, systematical and convincing: Lord Bolingbroke's, confused, prevaricating and inconsistent.

Lord Bolingbroke, however, to the last, standing in awe of his friend's piety and virtue, endeavoured to conceal his true principles from him: and he imposed upon him, in this respect, so effectually, that Mr. POPE would not credit any thing that tended to undeceive him.

A few days before Mr. POPE's death, he would be carried to London, to dine with Mr. Murray in Lincoln's-inn Fields, whom he loved with the fondness of a father; and he was solicitous that Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Warburton, the present Bishop of Gloucester, should be of the party.

Some time before, Mr. Warburton being with Mr. POPE at Twickenham, Mr. Hooke came in and told them, he had supped the night before at Battersea with Lord Bolingbroke; when his Lordship in conversation advanced the strangest notions concerning the *moral attributes* of the Deity, which amounted to an

express

express denial of them. This account gave Mr. POPE much uneasiness, and he told Mr. Hook, with some peevish heat, that he was sure he was mistaken. The other replied as warmly, that he thought he had sense enough not to mistake a man who spoke plainly, and in a language he understood. Here the matter dropped; but Mr. POPE was so shocked at this imputation, that he did not rest till he had asked Lord Bolingbroke whether Mr. Hook was not mistaken. Lord Bolingbroke assured him Mr. Hook misunderstood him. This assurance, Mr. POPE, with great pleasure, acquainted Mr. Warburton with, the next time he saw him.

Both Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. POPE were so full of this matter, that at dinner at Mr. Murray's, the conversation, among other things, naturally turned on this subject; when, from a very suspicious remark of his Lordship's, Mr. Warburton took occasion to speak of the clearness of our notions concerning the *moral attributes*; which occasioned a debate, that ended in some warmth on his Lordship's side.

This anecdote not only furnishes a vindication of Mr. POPE's religious sentiments, but likewise obviates the unjust reflections which have been thrown on the Bishop of Gloucester, as if he had not attacked his Lordship's impiety till after his death *.

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H

But

* His Lordship imposed on his friend Swift, in the same low manner, on the like occasion. His other learned friend of the triumvirate, as he calls them, Dr. Arbuthnot, was above the imposition, as never doubting of his Lordship's principles, and esteeming him accordingly. Dr. Swift having heard something of the licentiousness of his opinions, with the affection of a friend, that does honour to his memory, had told him what he heard, in a manner which shewed he gave credit to it. His Lordship, in a letter, dated September 12th, 1724, replies in these words.—“ I must, on this occasion, set you right as to an opinion, which I should be *very sorry* to have you entertain concerning me. The term *esprit fort*, in English, free-thinker, is, according to my observation, usually applied to them whom I look upon to be the *pests of society*: because their endeavours are directly to loosen the bands of it, and to take at least one curb out of the mouth of that wild beast
“ man;

But though his Lordship thought fit to keep his principles secret from his friend, as well as from the public; yet, after the prodigious success of the *Essay on Man*, he ungenerously used to make the poet, then alive and at his devotion, the frequent topic of ridicule among their common acquaintance, as a man who understood nothing of his own principles, nor saw to what they naturally led.

While things were in this state, M. de Croufay wrote some malignant and absurd *Remarks* on the *Essay on Man*, accusing it of Spinozism and Naturalism, &c. These Remarks, by accident, fell into the hands of the author of the *Divine Legation*, &c. and mere resentment against an ill-natured caviller, induced him to write a defence of the *first epistle*, which being well received, he applied himself to defend the rest, on the same principles of natural and revealed religion, against the blundering misrepresentations of

“man; when it would be well, if he was checked by half a score of others.—If indeed, by *esprit fort*, or freethinker, you mean a man who makes a free use of his reason, who searches after truth without passion or prejudice, and adheres inviolably to it; you mean a wise and honest man; and such a one as I labour to be.—Such freethinkers as these, I am sure you cannot, in your apostolical capacity, disapprove: For since the truth of the divine revelation of Christianity is as evident as matters of fact, on the belief of which so much depends, ought to be, and agreeable to all our ideas of justice; these freethinkers must needs be Christians on the best foundation; on that which St. Paul himself established, I think it was St. Paul, *omnia probate, quod bonum est tenete*.” This was in 1724; but vice proceeded, as the poet says, with such giant strides, that in 1732, that incomparable man, Dr. Arbuthnot, writes thus to Swift—“My neighbour, the professor, is wiser, and more cowardly and despairing than ever. He talks me into a fit of vapours—I dream at night of a chain and rowing in the galleys. But thank God he has not taken from me the freedom I have been accustomed to in my discourse (even with the greatest persons to whom I have access) in defending the cause of liberty, virtue, and religion: for the last, I have the satisfaction of suffering some of the ignominy that belonged to the first professors. This has been my lot, from a steady resolution I have taken of giving these ignorant fellows battle upon all occasions.”

the Swiss philosopher, and of a certain French translator of the Essay in verse, by whom M. de Croufaz had been frequently mislead.

In truth, the principal objection to the Essay on Man was its obscurity, which was intimated to our author, on its first appearance, by his friend Swift*.

The obscurity of the poem made a comment the more necessary; and Mr. POPE, who was naturally on the side of religion, embraced the sense given to the essay, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction†.

It cannot be supposed, however, that his Lordship took the same delight in seeing his pupil thus reasoned out of his hands; or, what was worse, in seeing him republish his essay with a defence, which put the poem on the side of religion, and the poet out of the necessity of supporting himself on his Lordship's system, when he should condescend to impart it to him: or, what was worst of all, in seeing him, at the commentator's instance, restore a great number of the best and most sublime lines, struck out of the manuscript, which no longer left his religious sentiments equivocal.

With respect to this essay, it is perhaps the most concise and perfect system of ethics in any language: it is one of the desiderata which Lord Bacon has marked out in his *de augmentis scientiarum*, a work which,

* "I confess," says Swift, "in some places I was forced to read twice. I believe I told you before what the Duke of Dorset said to me on the occasion, concerning the opinion of a judge here who knows you, and told him, that on the first reading these Essays, he was much pleased, but found some lines a little dark; on the second, most of them cleared up, and his pleasure increased; on the third, he had no doubts remaining, and that he admired the whole."

† This appears from the letters he wrote to the learned commentator on that occasion, wherein he candidly acknowledges the obscurity of the piece, and, among other things, says,—
"You have made my system as clear as I ought to have done, and could not: you understand me as well as I do myself, but you express me better than I could myself."

§ This poem was republished in the year 1740, with the commentary.

as will be shewn, our author seems to have had in his eye throughout. But it would be needless to detain the reader with a particular analysis of his treatise, as the design, method and end of this work, is fully and accurately explained and illustrated by the excellent commentary subjoined to it.

Nevertheless, as it is proposed not only to give the history of our author, but likewise a critique on his writings, so much notice must be taken of the conduct of this essay, as may serve to exemplify its most capital beauties and defects.

The first epistle considers the nature and state of man with respect to the Universe. Here the poet shews how imperfect our reasonings must be both with respect to God and Man: For that as we know no more of man, than what we can learn from his station here; so we know no more of God, than we see of his dispensations in this station. This leads the poet to the following sublime description of God's omniscience, followed by a just reproof of man's blind presumption.

- " He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
- " See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
- " Observe how system into system runs,
- " What other planets circle other suns,
- " What vary'd Being peoples ev'ry star,
- " May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
- " But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
- " The strong connections, nice dependencies,
- " Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
- " Look'd thro' ? or can a part contain the whole ?
- " *Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,*
- " And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee ?"

These noble and philosophic sentiments are enforced with such strength of reasoning and dignity of expression, as at once to awe the impious and check the presumptuous, who dare to scrutinize and arraign the wisdom and justice of the divine dispensations.

It is to be regretted however, that the line marked in Italics, should make a part of the foregoing extract. It is the most heavy, languid, and unpoetical of any perhaps that ever escaped from our author's pen: and the expletive *to* before the verb, is unpardonable *.

Having exposed the absurdity of prying into the manner in which God conducts this wonderful system, he proceeds to shew that such knowledge, if attainable, would be injurious to our happiness, which he proves by the following strong and beautiful exemplifications.

- “ Heav’n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
 “ All but the page prescrib’d, their present state:
 “ From brutes what men, from men what spirits
 “ know:
 “ Or who could suffer Being here below?
 “ The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
 “ Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?
 “ Pleas’d to the last, he crops the flow’ry food,
 “ And licks the hand just rais’d to shed his blood.
 “ Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv’n,
 “ That each may fill the circle mark’d by Heav’n:
 “ Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
 “ A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
 “ Atoms or systems into ruin hurl’d,
 “ And now a bubble burst, and now a world.”

It argues a fine imagination to be capable of selecting such striking contrasts.

The poet goes on to shew that our best comfort is the *hope* of a happy futurity, which he recommends by the example of the poor Indian, to whom also nature hath given this common hope of mankind.

* It has been observed, nevertheless, by the present Bishop of Gloucester, one of the most acute critics of this or any other age, that the slowness of the line here objected to, was, perhaps, purposely intended to express in the sound the slow, though powerful operations of providence, to the great end here pointed out.

" Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
 " Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
 " His soul, proud Science never taught to stray
 " Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
 " Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
 " Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;
 " Some safer world in depth of woods embac'd,
 " Some happier island in the watry waste;
 " Where slaves once more their native land be-
 " hold,
 " No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for
 " gold.
 " To Be, contents his natural desire,
 " He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire;
 " But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
 " His faithful dog shall bear him company."

The simplicity, humility and humanity of the poor Indian, are admirably pictured in these lines, of which the fine versification is perhaps the least beauty. There is something exquisitely plaintive and pathetic in his humble hope for that *safer* world, where slaves may once more behold their native land; and in the next line, the poet has with great address turned his indignant satire against the diabolical barbarities practised on that part of our species, who only differ from us in complexion: while they who enslave and torment them, are no more like men, than they are like Christians. Our poet calls them Christians, to shew their cruelty in a more affecting light. Satire never cuts so keenly, as when humanity gives it an edge †.

Our author having, in the next place, traced the source of *moral* evil, which proceeds from the abuse

† Witness these lines, among others, in one of his satires, where he speaks of a great man who had lost his stomach by intemperance, on seeing the hearty appetite of a beggar:

" Call'd *happy* dog the beggar at his door;
 " And envy'd thirst and hunger to the poor."

of man's free will, he then shews, by way of analogy, that it tends to the good of the universe, in like manner as *natural* evil tends to the good of this globe.

- “ If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's
 “ design,
 “ Why then a *Borgia*, or a *Catiline* ?
 “ Who knows but He, whose hand the lightning
 “ forms,
 “ Who heaves old Oceans, and who wings the
 “ storms ;
 “ Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
 “ Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge man-
 “ kind ?”

How admirably, in these lines, are the reasonings of moral philosophy exemplified with all the force and beauty of analogical argument, and illustrated with all the sublime of poetry!

The folly of man's wishing for visionary advantages, not adapted to his nature, is next exposed.

- “ The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing
 “ find)
 “ Is not to act or think beyond mankind ;
 “ No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
 “ But what his nature and his state can bear.
 “ Why has not Man a microscopic Eye ?
 “ For this plain reason, Man is not a Fly.
 “ Say what the use were finer optics giv'n,
 “ T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n ?
 “ Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
 “ To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore ?
 “ Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,
 “ Die of a rose in aromatic pain ?
 “ If Nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,
 “ And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
 “ How would he wish that Heav'n had left him
 “ still
 “ The whisp'ring Zephyr, and the purling rill ?

“ Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
 “ Alike in what it gives, and what denies ?”

With what sprightly raillery, with what exquisite imagination, has the poet ridiculed the absurdity of those discontented mortals, who covet superfluous, nay pernicious endowments ? The whole passage is so animated, so ornate and poetical, that it is with regret we point out any imperfection in it. Nevertheless, as the learned commentator has remarked, the illustration drawn from the music of the spheres, is certainly misplaced, as the precision of philosophical argument required the poet to employ the *real* objects of sense only.

The poet farther shews that the indulging of man's extravagant desires would not only be useless and injurious to him, but that it would break into the order of the creation, wherein all systems and beings, from the highest to the lowest, are connected as by a link or chain ; and that the least confusion in one system, would be attended with the destruction of the whole ; which he illustrates by the following sublime passage.

“ Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
 “ Planets and stars run lawless through the sky ;
 “ Let ruling Angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
 “ Being on Being wreck'd, and world on world ;
 “ Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,
 “ And nature tremble to the throne of God.”

There is no reading these lines without being struck with a momentary apprehension. We feel the dreadful disorder here described, and old Chaos rushes to our view.

The second Epistle treats of the nature and state of man with respect to himself, as an individual. The poet here recommends the study of mankind, and shews the imperfect state of the human understanding with regard to the knowledge of ourselves. He re-
 presents

presents man as doubting and wavering between the objects of right and wrong.

- " With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
- " With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
- " He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
- " In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;
- " In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer;
- " Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
- " Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
- " Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
- " Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;
- " Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;
- " Created half to rise, and half to fall;
- " Great Lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
- " Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd;
- " The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!"

Nothing can be more animated, more pointed, and at the same time more just, than this description of man's imperfect state, with respect to the knowledge of himself, which is of all others the most difficult: For to whatever extent he may stretch his understanding in other sciences, yet in the knowledge of his own nature, he will necessarily be more limited, as the intervention of the passions will check and impede the operations of his reason.

There are, as the poet observes, two principles in human nature, *Self-love* and *Reason*: of which the distinct offices are explained.

Self-love is the Spring of action; Reason the balance which governs it.—

- " Most strength the moving principle requires:
- " Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.
- " Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,
- " Form'd but to check, deliberate, and advise.
- " Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;
- " Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:

" That sees immediate good by present sense ;
 " Reason, the future and the consequence *."

The passions, our author observes, are but modes of self-love : and their influence and use in human life are admirably described in the following lines.

" Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
 " Lift under Reason, and deserve her care ;
 " Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
 " Exalt their kind, and take some Virtue's name.
 " In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast
 " Their Virtue fix'd ; 'tis fix'd as in a frost ;
 " Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;
 " But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest :
 " The rising tempest puts in act the soul,
 " Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
 " On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
 " Reason the card, but passion is the gale † ;
 " Not God alone in the still calm we find,
 " He mounts the storm, and walks upon the
 " wind."

Perhaps strength of reasoning and harmony of numbers were never more happily united than in the foregoing extract ; and the image, by which the truth of the argument is illustrated in the two concluding lines, is as sublime as poetry can express.

Nor are the succeeding lines less poetical or just, wherein our author remarks, that though all the passions, in their turn, influence the human mind, yet there is one *master passion*, which, in the end, overpowers and absorbs the rest.

* To the same effect Lord Bacon expresses himself. " The affections," says he, " carry ever an appetite to good, as reason doth. The difference is, that the affection beholdeth merely the present, reason beholdeth the future and sum of time."

† " The mind," says Lord Bacon, " would be temperate and stayed, if the affections, as winds, did not put it into tumult and perturbation."

" Plea-

“ Reason itself but gives it edge and pow’r ;
 “ As Heav’n’s blest beam turns vinegar more
 “ four.”

But the poet rises with his subject, till he leads us into ecstasy. Speaking of the inefficacy of reason to controul the ruling passion, he says,

“ We, wretched subjects, tho’ to lawful sway,
 “ In this weak queen, some fav’rite still obey :
 “ Ah ! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
 “ What can she more than tell us we are fools ?
 “ Teach us to mourn our Nature, not to mend,
 “ A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend !
 “ Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
 “ The choice we make, or justify it made ;
 “ Proud of an easy conquest all along,
 “ She but removes weak Passions for the strong * :
 “ So, when small humours gather to a gout,
 “ The doctor fancies he has driv’n them out.”

There is something in these lines inexpressibly plaintive and affecting. They come home to every man’s bosom : and while we admire them as beautiful, we sigh to own them just. Nevertheless, I will be free to remark, that their effect is in some measure weakened, by the levity of the illustration in the two last lines. It must be confessed that it is sprightly, but it draws the mind too suddenly from grave to gay, which cannot be endured without violence and disgust.

“ *should be free.* So should a female friend of ours † ; but *habit* is her *Goddest*, I wish I could not say worse, her *tyrant* : she not only *obeys*, but suffers under her : and reason and friendship plead in vain. Out of hell, and out of habit, there is no redemption.”

* It is of special use in morality, as Lord Bacon observes, to set affection against affection, and endeavour to master one passion by another, as we hunt beast with beast, &c.

† Meaning Mrs. Blount.

The

The poet observes, that though reason cannot overthrow the ruling passion, it is nevertheless her office to rectify it, and sometimes to engraft our ruling virtue upon it :

“ See anger, zeal and fortitude supply ;
“ Ev’n av’rice, prudence ; sloth, philosophy.”

In the last place, he shews the use of the passions in alleviating the real miseries of life, by presenting us with some visionary happiness which deludes us through every age.

“ Mean-while Opinion gilds with varying rays
“ Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;
“ Each want of Happiness, by Hope supply’d,
“ And each vacuity of sense by Pride :
“ These build as fast as knowledge can destroy ;
“ In folly’s cup still laughs the bubble, joy.”

With what apt and beautiful imagery has the poet here painted the sweet illusions of life ! The figure, in the two first lines especially, is happily conceived, and so admirably sustained, that our eyes, for a moment, are dazzled with the deceitful splendor of a gaudy evanescent scene.

In the third epistle, the nature and state of man is considered with respect to society. Here the author, in a strain of harmonious and sublime poetry, shews the close connection between each being in the universe, all served, and serving—

“ Has God, thou fool ! work’d solely for thy
“ good,
“ Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food ?
“ Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
“ For him as kindly spreads the flow’ry lawn :
“ Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings ?
“ Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
“ Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat ?
“ Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.

“ The

- " The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
 " Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
 " Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain ?
 " The birds of Heav'n shall vindicate their grain.
 " Thine the full harvest of the golden year ?
 " Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer :
 " The hog, that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,
 " Lives on the labours of this Lord of all."

The author then shews the difference between the happiness of animal and of human life. The one consisting in the improvement of the mind, is to be procured by reason only ; the other, consisting in the gratification of sense, is best promoted by instinct, which, with regard to its regular and constant operation, has the advantage over reason —

- " And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,
 " In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man."

The instances by which the author exemplifies this divine direction, are happily selected, and expressed with great harmony and dignity.

- " Who taught the nations of the field and wood
 " To shun their poison, and to choose their food ?
 " Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
 " Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand ?
 " Who made the spider parallels design,
 " Sure as *De-moivre*, without rule or line ?
 " Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore
 " Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown be-
 " fore ?
 " Who calls the council, states the certain day,
 " Who forms the phalanx, and who points the
 " way * ?"

The

* The poet probably took the hint of this beautiful passage from Lord Bacon's *de augmentis scientiarum*.—" Who taught
 " the raven in a drought to throw pebbles into an hollow tree
 " where she espied water, that the water might rise so as she
 " might

The poet, having described the power of instinct in promoting the happiness of the *Individual* and of the *Kind*, he proceeds to shew, that all these being parts of a whole God——

“ ————— The Whole to blefs,
“ On mutual Wants built mutual Happiness.”

This leads him to illustrate the original of society, both *natural* and *civil*. In opposition to Hobbs, he represents the state of nature as a state of peace and innocence, of which he gives the following beautiful description.

“ Self-love and Social at her birth began,
“ Union the bond of all things, and of Man. “
“ Pride then was not; nor Arts, that Pride to
“ aid;
“ Man walk’d with beast, joint-tenant of the
“ shade;
“ The same his table, and the same his bed;
“ No murder cloath’d him, and no murder fed.
“ In the same temple, the resounding wood,
“ All vocal beings hymn’d an equal God:
“ The shrine with gore unstain’d, with gold un-
“ drest,
“ Unbrib’d, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:
“ Heav’n’s attribute was Universal Care,
“ And Man’s prerogative to rule, but spare.
“ Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
“ Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
“ Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen’ral groan,
“ Murders their species, and betrays his own.
“ But just disease to luxury succeeds,
“ And ev’ry death its own avenger breeds;

“ might come to it? Who taught the bee to sail through such
“ a vast sea of air, and to find a way from the field in flower,
“ a great way off to her hive? Who taught the Ant to bite
“ every grain of corn that she burieth in her hill, lest it should
“ take root and grow?”

“ The

“ The Fury-passions from that blood began,
 “ And turn’d on Man a fiercer savage, Man.”

What various beauties are comprized in these lines! With what an amiable simplicity is man’s natural state described! With what tender sympathy the author bewails the degeneracy which succeeded! With what indignant rebuke he marks the bloody havock caused by luxury! And with what physical propriety, he traces the rise of the furious passions from the indulgence of a sanguinary appetite!

The order of the subject next leads the poet to explain the origin of *civil* society. He describes man rising gradually from nature to art, and observes, that in such progress, it was the part of reason to copy from instinct, which he illustrates by a most excellent and sublime *prosopopoeia*.

“ Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake—
 “ —Go, from the Creatures thy instructions
 “ take;
 “ Learn from the birds what food the thickets
 “ yield;
 “ Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;
 “ Thy arts of building from the bee receive;
 “ Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to
 “ weave;
 “ Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,
 “ Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
 “ *Here too all forms of social union find,*
 “ And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind.
 “ Here subterranean works and cities see;
 “ There towns aerial on the waving tree.
 “ Learn each small People’s genius, policies,
 “ The Ants’ republic, and the realm of Bees;
 “ How those in common all their wealth be-
 “ stow,
 “ And Anarchy without confusion know;
 “ And these for ever, tho’ a Monarch reign,
 “ Their sep’rate cells and properties maintain.

“ Mark

" Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,
 " Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate."

These philosophical illustrations are graced with all the ornaments of poetry: And while the reasoning mortifies our pride, the numbers flatter our taste.

The account which the poet gives of the origin of *Religion* is too excellent to be omitted. It is obvious that the religion of man, at his first entrance into civil society, must have been the same as in a state of nature. By looking up from fire to fire, he explored one great first Father, or else he gained the knowledge of God by tradition. The poor and simple ideas which man then entertained of the attributes of the Deity are thus admirably described—

" The Worker from the work distinct was known,
 " And simple Reason never sought but one:
 " Ere Wit oblique had broke that steady light,
 " Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right;
 " To Virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,
 " And own'd a Father when he own'd a God."

The writer here, with great address, makes philosophy assistant to religion*.

Nor does the poet display less merit in the contrast which follows, wherein he traces the corruption of civil society, and consequently of religion.

" Force first made conquest, and that conquest,
 " law;
 " Till superstition taught the Tyrant awe.

* * * * *

" Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes;
 " Fear made her Devils, and weak Hope her
 " Gods;

* All good moral philosophy, says Lord Bacon, is but an handmaid to religion.

" Gods

" Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
 " Whose attributes were Rage, Revenge, or Lust;
 " Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
 " And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would be-
 " lieve.
 " Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;
 " And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.
 " Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more;
 " Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:
 " 'Then first the Flamen tasted living food;
 " Next his grim Idol smear'd with human blood;
 " With heav'n's own thunders shook the world
 " below,
 " And play'd the God an engine on his foe."

The fatal effects of tyranny and superstition, are here described in the most bold and glowing colours. The opposition between zeal and charity is happily introduced. The eleventh line is awfully sublime, and pregnant with more meaning than it expresses.

In the deduction which the author draws from hence, he shews with great judgment and address, that the same principle which gave birth to this corruption, did at the same time pave the way for a reformation.

" So drives Self-love, thro' just and thro' un-
 " just,
 " To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust;
 " The same Self-love, *in all*, becomes the cause
 " Of what restrains him; Government and Laws."

This leads the poet to illustrate the true principles of policy and religion—

" Such is the World's great Harmony, * that
 " springs
 " From Order, Union, full Consent of things,
 " Where

* Mr. Croufaz, mistaking the harmony which the poet here speaks of, accused him of espousing the *pre-established* harmony

" Where small and great, where weak and mighty;
 " made
 " To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;
 " More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
 " And, in proportion as it blesses, blest;
 " Draw to one point, and to one centre bring
 " Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord or King."

Nothing can be more amiable, just, wise and benevolent, than the foregoing system: and as such a system is always in danger from the refinements of too curious speculation, the poet very justly reprehends this propensity in the following lines.

" For Forms of Government let fools contest;
 " Whate'er is best administer'd, is best:
 " For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight;
 " His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

These lines, more especially the first two, have been frequently misinterpreted; and it has been supposed that the author meant to insinuate that no one *form* of government was, in itself, better than another: An absurdity from which he is clearly vindicated by the learned editor of his works, as well as by an apology found under his own hand, which the editor has subjoined to the note on these lines. Indeed it is strange to imagine that one of Mr.

harmony of the celebrated Leibnitz. The learned commentator, however, has clearly vindicated him from any intention of espousing that impious whimsy. The reader, nevertheless, will doubtless be pleased to hear what our author himself says on this occasion, in a letter addressed to his friend and commentator.

" I will not give you the unnecessary trouble of adding here
 " to the defence you have made of me, (though much might
 " be said on the article of the passions in the second book;)
 " only it cannot be unpleasant to you to know, that I never in
 " my life read a line of Leibnitz, nor understood there was
 " such a term as *pre-established harmony*, till I found it in
 " Mons. Croufaz's book."

POPE'S

POPE's correct *judgment* should ever entertain such a solecism.

That administration is best, which is conducted according to the true principles of the established constitution. Consequently if those principles are bad, the more perfect the administration is, the more destructive it will prove to the governed. Mr. POPE, in his apology above alluded to, admits, that the *best* sort of government, when the form of it is preserved, and the administration corrupt, is most dangerous: so, on the other hand, it is equally true, that the *worst* kind of government, when the form of it is preserved, and the administration perfect, is the most pernicious.

However, I am free to confess, that though, taking the whole context together, the *meaning* of these lines may be well ascertained, yet the *expression* is, to say no more, obscure; and does by no means convey that meaning with our author's usual perspicuity. For, notwithstanding his apology, and the very ingenious exposition of his commentator, the expression is too general to admit of such limitations as the true construction requires.

The poet, having explained the true principles of policy and religion, and shewn, that however the world may disagree about religious and political principles, yet charity is, nevertheless, the concern of all mankind, he concludes this epistle with the following incomparable lines.

- “ Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives;
 “ The strength he gains is from th' embrace he
 “ gives.
 “ On their own Axis as the Planets run,
 “ Yet make at once their circle round the Sun;
 “ So two *consistent* motions act the Soul;
 “ And one regards itself, and one the Whole *.”

The

* The same sentiment we find in substance, thus expressed by Lord Bacon——“ There is formed in every thing a double nature of good: the one, as every thing is a total or substance in itself; the other, as it is a part or member of a
 “ great

The poet has here, with peculiar skill and felicity, contrived, that the same ornaments which embellish his verse, should strengthen his arguments. These beautiful and sublime similes, afford the most apt and powerful illustration of the truth of that proposition, which he would imprint on the reader's mind, namely, that Self-love and Social are the same.

Having thus displayed the nature of man in his various relations, in his fourth and last Epistle, he considers his nature and state with respect to happiness, the end which every human being pursues.

This epistle opens with an invocation to happiness; and the reader will find a summary of false and true felicity in the following lines: wherein the poet, with his usual address, has contrived to illustrate the proposition he would prove, by the most beautiful images, conveyed in the most harmonious versification.

" Oh Happiness! our being's end and aim!

" Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy
" name:

" That something still which prompts th' eternal
" sigh,

" For which we bear to live, or dare to die,

" Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,

" O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool, and
" wife.

" Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,

" Say in what mortal soil thou deign'st to
" grow?

" Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,

" Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine?

" Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels
" yield,

" Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?

" great body; whereof the latter is in degree the greater and

" the worthier, because it tendeth to the conservation of a
" more general form."

" Where

- “ Where grows?—where grows it not? If vain
 “ our toil,
 “ We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:
 “ Fix'd to no spot is Happiness sincere,
 “ 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where.”

The poet having farther expos'd and confuted the idle notions concerning happiness, which were propagated by the ancient philosophers; of whom some placed it in action, some in ease*, &c. he proceeds more particularly to explain in what it truly consists.

- “ Take Nature's path, and mad Opinions leave,
 “ All states can reach it, and all heads conceive;
 “ Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
 “ There needs but thinking right, and meaning
 “ well;
 “ And mourn our various portions as we please,
 “ Equal is Common Sense, and Common Ease.”

It will probably occur to the learned reader, that the poet has here adopted the sentiments of the Grecian sage, who said——“ That if we live
 “ according to Nature, we shall never be poor; and
 “ if we live according to Opinion, we shall never
 “ be rich.”

Our poet then goes on to shew in what true happiness consists; which he thus forcibly explains.

- “ Know, all the good that individuals find,
 “ Or God and Nature meant to mere mankind,
 “ Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
 “ Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Com-
 “ petence.
 “ But Health consists with Temperance alone;
 “ And Peace, oh Virtue! Peace is all thy own.”

The

* Mr. POPE, in one of his letters to M. Allen, has, in few words, expressed his idea of Happiness——“ To be at ease,” says he, “ is the greatest of happiness (at ease, I mean, both of
 “ mind

The strong and affecting manner in which these sentiments are expressed, naturally disposes a mind of any sensibility, to that serene and placid state which is attendant on virtue. The invocation, and emphatic repetition in the last line, have a peculiar energy and pathos.

To those who impiously arraign providence for not preventing the evils which befall the good and just in this world; our author answers in the following lines.

- " Shall burning Etna, if a sage requires,
 " Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?
 " On air or sea new motions be imprest,
 " Oh blameless Bethel*! to relieve thy breast?
 " When the loose mountain trembles from on
 " high,
 " Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?
 " Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,
 " For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?"

This argument, by which the poet shews that the evils complained of, could not be prevented, without continually reversing the established laws of nature, is finely illustrated.

The poet next turns toward another sort of cavillers, who murmur at the dispensations of providence,

" mind and body) but to be *idle* is the greatest of unhappiness,
 " both to the one and the other."

* In a letter which our author, soon after the death of his mother, wrote to Mr. Bethel, he seems to hint at this passage:

" I have now but too much melancholy leisure, and no
 " other care but to finish my Essay on Man. There will be
 " in it but one line that will offend you (I fear) and yet I will
 " not alter it or omit it, unless you come to town and prevent
 " me before I print it, which will be in a fortnight in all probability.
 " In plain truth, I will not deny myself the greatest
 " pleasure I am capable of receiving, because another may
 " have the modesty not to share it. It is all a poor poet can
 " do, to bear testimony to the virtue he cannot reach: besides
 " that, in this age, I see too few good examples, not to lay
 " hold on any I can find."

because

because the *just* are not better rewarded. To these he answers, that God only can tell who those *just* are; and with the most exquisite feeling, he again points out the inestimable reward of Virtue.

“ What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
 “ The soul’s calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt
 “ joy,
 “ Is Virtue’s prize.”——

He then proceeds to shew, that without virtue, no externals whatever can make men happy; which he instances in riches, honours, nobility, greatness, and fame.

The false pretensions of greatness are admirably exposed in the characters of the hero and politician.

“ Look next on Greatness; say where Greatness
 “ lies?

“ Where, but among the Heroes and the Wise?

“ Heroes are much the same, the point’s
 “ agreed,

“ From Macedonia’s madman to the Swede;

“ The whole strange purpose of their lives, to
 “ find

“ Or make, an enemy of all mankind *!

* * * * *

“ No less alike the Politic and Wise;

“ All fly flow things, with circumspective eyes:

* These two lines which immediately follow——

“ Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,

“ Yet ne’er looks forward further than his nose;”

are by no means suitable to the dignity of the subject. There is something so familiar, nay even vulgar in them, as renders them not only very unequal to the rest, but very unworthy of our author.

“ Men

- “ Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,
 “ Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.
 “ But grant that those can conquer, these can
 “ cheat ;
 “ ’Tis phrase absurd, to call a Villain Great :
 “ Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,
 “ Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.
 “ Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
 “ Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
 “ Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed
 “ Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.”

It is observable, that the writer on no occasion shews a more indignant spirit, than where he points his satire against Machiavelian policy and circumventing craft. I make this remark with the greater pleasure, as it goes in commendation of the *man*, and as society is more interested to have a just account of his moral character, than of his literary capacity.

The following estimate of fame, is extremely just and beautiful.

- “ What’s Fame ? a fancy’d life in others breath,
 “ A thing beyond us, ev’n before our death.

* * * * *

- “ All that we feel of it begins and ends
 “ In the small circle of our foes and friends ;
 “ To all beside, as much an empty shade
 “ An Eugene living, as a Caesar dead :

* * * * *

- “ A Wit’s a feather, and a Chief a rod ;
 “ An honest Man’s the noblest work of God *.”

VOL. I. I Having

* A great lawyer, who had a profligate son, bequeathed him a trifling legacy, together with this verse of Mr. POPE’S, desiring him to reflect on it often.

Never-

Having exposed this fantastic fame, he shews the foundation of real fame.

- " All Fame is foreign, but of true desert ;
 " Plays round the head, but comes not to the
 " heart :
 " One self-approving hour whole years out-
 " weighs
 " Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas ;
 " And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
 " Than Caesar with a senate at his heels."

Nothing can be more just than these sentiments, or more beautifully expressed. The image of fantastic Fame playing round the head without reaching the heart, is happily conceived ; it is apt and striking. A man of sound judgment and nice feelings must be frequently offended by the flutter of mistaken applause, which buzzes about his head but makes no impression on his heart.

Nevertheless, this sentiment has been censured by a very ingenious writer, who observes, that " if honesty had been Pope's noblest quality, he would never have gained public admiration." But the critic seems to give this sentiment a confined construction. The poet here does not use the word *honest* in its popular sense, but in its philosophical signification : in which the idea of an honest man includes a certain liberality and elevation of mind, which is not to be attained without the concurrence of many noble qualities. The talents which we exercise in the eye of the public are, it is true, more likely to draw admiration ; but they are not therefore more noble. The man who can suffer with fortitude and act with dignity, is a much more noble object, than he who can express the sublimest ideas. Besides, it is material to add, that the poet is here decrying that *public admiration* which the critic, by this strange argument, not only supposes was his general aim, but was his particular purpose in this place to recommend.

The poet proceeds to shew, that not only external goods are incapable of procuring happiness, but that all internal have not that efficacy, which he instances in the advantage of superior parts.

- “ In Parts superior what advantage lies ?
 “ Tell (for You can) what is it to be wise ?
 “ ’Tis but to know how little can be known ;
 “ To see all others faults, and feel our own :
 “ Condemn’d in business or in arts to drudge,
 “ Without a second, or without a judge :
 “ Truths would you teach, or save a sinking
 “ land ?
 “ All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
 “ Painful preheminance ! yourself to view
 “ Above life’s weakness, and its comforts too.”

How feelingly does the poet describe the unenviable situation of those who possess excelling talents ! And yet he has only sketched the out-lines : had he filled the canvas, what a picture of solitary dejection * would a pencil like his have exhibited !

The man of superior parts can but seldom relish the true delights of society, because he can find but few with whom he can assimilate. And alas ! even among those few, he too often finds a rival, where he expected a companion.

As his merit excites jealousy in his equals, so it begets distrust in those of inferior talents. Such, for want of the same quickness of apprehension and depth of penetration, being unable to discern the true principles which direct him, are too apt to suspect him of design, even when he is most ingenuous ; and he has sometimes the mortification of being prevented from conferring a benefit, by the unjust suspicion of the very man whom he means to serve. How deplorable then must his condition be, whose superior parts exclude him from the

* The reader will observe that we are here speaking of *Knowledge*, independent of *Virtue*.

affection of his equals, and the confidence of his inferiors!

As no qualities, therefore, either external or internal, can, as our author has shewn, constitute felicity, independent of virtue, he proceeds to prove how far happiness may be conferred and enlarged by that alone.

“ Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)

“ Virtue alone is Happiness below. ” *

“ The only point where human bliss stands still,

“ And tastes the good without the fall to ill ;

“ Where only Merit constant pay receives,

“ Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives ;

“ The joy unequal’d if its end it gain,

“ And if it lose, attended with no pain :

“ Without satiety, tho’ e’er so blest’d,

“ And but more relish’d as the more distress’d :

“ The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,

“ Less pleasing far than Virtue’s very tears :

“ Good, from each object, from each place acquir’d,

“ For ever exercis’d, yet never tir’d ;

“ Never elated, while one man’s oppress’d ;

“ Never dejected, while another’s blest’d ;

“ And where no wants, no wishes can remain,

“ Since but to wish more Virtue, is to gain.”

There is something in these lines so soothing and persuasive, that it is impossible to read them without sympathetic emotions, and wishing to exercise that benevolence which is here so beautifully described.

* In one of his letters to Mr. Bethel he jocosely says—“ I am writing an epistle on the true happiness of man, in which I shall prove the best man the happiest; and consequently you should pull off your hat to me, for painting you as the happiest man in the universe.”

Nor will a reader of sensibility be less delighted with the following lines, which mark the difference between the progress of human and divine benevolence.

“ God loves from Whole to Parts : But human
 “ soul
 “ Must rise from Individual to the Whole *.
 “ Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to
 “ wake,
 “ As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
 “ The centre mov’d, a circle straight succeeds,
 “ Another still, and still another spreads ;
 “ Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace ;
 “ His country next ; and next all human race † ;
 “ Wide and more wide, th’ o’erflowings of
 “ the mind
 “ Take ev’ry creature in, of ev’ry kind ;
 “ Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty
 “ blest,
 “ And Heav’n beholds its image in his breast.”

* In one of our author’s letters to Mr. Bethel, he says——

“ I much better understand the beauties of friendship and
 “ the merits of virtue in private life, than those of public ;
 “ and should never love my country, if I did not love the best
 “ men in it.”

† To the same effect are his private sentiments to his particular friend Mr. Allen——

“ I thank you for the account of your safe arrival at home ;
 “ there is the end of all your wishes : than which, there can
 “ be no greater happiness on this side of the grave. Un-
 “ happy is the man who must ramble in search of it ! I can
 “ pray for no greater blessing for a friend, than that he may
 “ love his own home, his own family, and next his neigh-
 “ bour ; yet be resigned to leave his present residence, when-
 “ ever Providence ordains : and love his own family, yet
 “ consider the *whole world* as his relations, though more
 “ distant.”

Here we have another instance of the poet's happy choice of poetical embellishments. The simile † he has employed, affords the clearest illustration of the expanding nature of benevolence, and establishes the truth of his reasoning, at the same time that it gives beauty to the poem.

But as genius, like fame, gathers strength in its course, so in the conclusion of the Essay, our poet seems to have collected all his powers, to complete the following noble apostrophe——

“ Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come
“ along;

“ Oh master of the poet, and the song!

“ And while the Muse now stoops, or now
“ ascends,

“ To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends,

“ Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,

“ To fall with dignity, with temper rise;

“ Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer

“ From grave to gay, from lively to severe;

“ Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,

“ Intent to reason, or polite to please.

“ Oh! while along the stream of Time thy
“ name

“ Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;

“ Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,

“ Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?

“ When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,

“ Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy
“ foes,

“ Shall then this verse to future age pretend

“ Thou wert my GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER and
“ FRIEND?

“ That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art

“ From sounds to things, from fancy to the
“ heart;

† The reader, who recollects the simile in Addison's Cato, cannot fail being smitten with the resemblance.

“ For Wit’s false mirror held up Nature’s
 “ light,
 “ Shew’d erring Pride, WHATEVER IS, IS
 “ RIGHT;
 “ That REASON, PASSION, answer one great
 “ aim;
 “ That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the
 “ same;
 “ That VIRTUE only makes our Blifs below;
 “ And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO
 “ KNOW.”

These excellent lines, as the learned commentator accurately observes, will furnish a critic with examples of each of those five species of elocution, from which, as from its sources, Longinus deduceth the sublime. Namely, a grandeur and sublimity of conception; a pathetic enthusiasm; an elegant formation and ordonnance of figures; a splendid diction; and a weight and dignity in the composition. In short, had Mr. POPE given no other specimen of his poetical talents, we might from these lines only, safely pronounce him a poet.

Upon the whole, though in this ethical system, it must be confessed, that the great outlines are taken from the most excellent of the ancient and modern writers; yet let it be observed, that had he not copied those outlines, he must have sketch’d out a Chimera: And this is the only species of poetical INVENTION, in which our poet was wanting. For in all invention (to use this misapplied term) within the verge of nature, his poetry in every line abounds. If justly drawing, artfully grouping, and strongly expressing, in a well chosen subject, ever gave poet or painter the pretence to *invention*, it might be claimed by our author.

Whenever he borrows a thought, he improves it to that degree that it becomes original. There is so much precision and perspicuity, so much of the *lucidus ordo*, in his chain of reasoning, the images by which he illustrates his arguments are so appropriated

priated and striking, and his numbers so harmonious ; that every sentiment wears an air of novelty, and displays the excellence of human wit, as himself justly defines it.

“ True Wit is Nature to advantage drest ;

“ What oft was thought, but ne’er so well expressed.”

In short, after having demolished the monstrous superstructures of the ancients, he has employed the old materials which composed them, in a regular and beautiful fabric, in which all the parts correspond with such exact symmetry, and the whole bespeaks such an air of noble simplicity, as proves it to be the *invention* of a correct and sublime genius*.

This poem soon became so universally celebrated that it was translated into French by Monsieur Resnel †, and Monsieur Croufaz wrote a formal critique upon it. The errors and absurdities of several of his re-

* It may be curious to remark, that when this poem was first published, our author carefully concealed its being his production, and it was ascribed to Dr. Young, to Dr. Desaguliers, to Lord Bolingbroke, to Lord Paget, and several others. While his acquaintance read it as the work of an unknown author, they fairly owned they did not understand it.

Among others, a certain little poet, speaking, in a visit he paid Mr. POPE, of the *Essay on Man*, soon after its appearance, observed with an air of critical self-sufficiency, that the poetry was but indifferent, the philosophy intolerable, and the whole devoid of connection. If I thought, added he, that you had not seen it, I would have brought it with me. Mr. POPE, to mortify the coxcomb, frankly told him that he had seen it before it went to the press; for that it was his own performance, and had been the work of some years. The confusion of the visitor, at this declaration, may be easier conceived than expressed.

When the reputation of the poem however became secured, by the knowledge of the writer, it soon grew so clear and intelligible, that on the appearance of the comment upon it, they told him they wondered the editor should think a large and minute interpretation necessary.

† It was likewise translated into Latin verse by Dr. Kirkpatrick.

marks,

marks, were owing to the blunders and inaccuracies of his country-man's translation, which misled him in many instances; nevertheless, some of his false criticisms are owing to his own misapprehensions. But this idle critique is so fully answered and refuted by the learned comment subjoined to this piece, that it is needless to say more of it †.

It remains to observe, that some passages in the *Essay on Man*, having been unjustly suspected of a tendency toward fate and naturalism, the author composed a prayer as the sum of all; which is printed under the title of the UNIVERSAL PRAYER, and was intended to shew that his system was founded in *free will*, and terminated in piety—and surely devotion

† Our author was so sensible of the service done to his work by this comment, that he did not fail to make grateful acknowledgments of it in the following letter, addressed to his friend and commentator, dated February 2, 1738, wherein, with conscious dignity, he expresses his indifference with regard to unjust censure.

"I cannot forbear to return you my thanks for your animadversion on Mr. Croufaz: though I doubt not it was less a regard to me, than to candor and truth, which made you take this pains to answer so mistaken a man. I fear, indeed, he did not attack me on quite so good a principle: and whenever I see such a vein of uncharitableness and vanity in any work, whether it concerns me or another, I am always ready to thank God to find it accompanied with as much weakness. But this is what I should never have exposed myself, and therefore I am the more obliged to you for doing it."

This, and the foregoing letters, wherein our poet pays grateful acknowledgments to his learned friend and commentator, naturally leads us to reflect on the different nature of the obligations which he owed to this celebrated personage, and to the deceased Lord Bolingbroke.

The latter *would have* given a bias to this admirable essay, which would have been disgraceful to our bard's understanding, dishonourable to his virtue, and injurious to society: the former on the other hand, *did* give a bias to it, which will reflect immortal honour on the poet's sense, do everlasting credit to his virtue, and be for ever serviceable to mankind. Now let the world determine, which of the two deserves the incomparable praise of being——

The Poet's Guide, Philosopher, and FRIEND.

never breathed a more pure, simple, and at the same time, a more exalted strain, than in the following inimitable stanzas.

“Thou Great First Cause, least understood:

“Who all my Sense confin’d

“To know but this, that Thou art good,

“And that myself am blind * ;

“Yet gave me, in this dark estate,

“To see the Good from Ill ;

“And binding Nature fast in Fate,

“Left *free* the Human Will §.

“What *Conscience* dictates to be done,

“Or warns me not to do,

“This, teach me more than Hell to shun,

“That, more than Heav’n pursue.

* In the first epistle, after having vindicated the ways of God, against those who murmur at the imperfections of human nature; he concludes to the same effect as above.

“Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name:

“Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.

“*Know thy own point*: this kind, this due degree

“Of *blindness*, weakness, Heav’n bestows on thee.”

§ Our author, in the second epistle, has proved this *freedom* of man’s will.—He has shewn that virtue and vice are blended in our nature, like light and shade; and that though it is often difficult to distinguish genuine virtue from the spurious, yet there is an unerring criterion by which we may discern the difference._____

“This light and darkness in our chaos join’d,

“What shall divide? The God within the mind——

that is, CONSCIENCE.—He hath likewise shewn that man hath it in his power to direct his passions to good or bad ends:

“*Reason* the bias, turns to good from ill.”

“Yet

“ Yet not to earth’s contracted Span
 “ Thy Goodness let me bound,
 “ Or think Thee Lord alone of Man †,
 “ When thousand Worlds are round :

“ Let not this weak, unknowing hand
 “ Presume thy Bolts to throw,
 “ And deal Damnation round the land,
 “ On each I judge thy Foe §.

“ If I am right, thy Grace * impart,
 “ Still in the right to stay ,
 “ If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
 “ To find that better way.

“ Save

† The folly and impiety of thus limiting the divine goodness,
 is strongly exposed in the third epistle——

“ One all-extending, all-preserving soul,
 “ Connects each being, &c.

Again——

“ Has God, thou fool, work’d solely for thy good,
 “ Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food ?

§ The writer, in the third epistle, after tracing the corruption of religion, and the origin of superstition, inveighs with great vehemence against the corrupt and vengeful spirit, which—

“ With Heav’n’s own thunder shook the world below,
 “ And play’d the God an engine on his foe.”

* His learned friend and annotator on this passage has acutely remarked, that as the *imparting of grace*, on the Christian system, is a stronger exertion of divine power, than the natural illumination of the heart; one would expect that *right* and *wrong* should change places; more aid being required to *restore* men to right, than to keep them in it. But as it was the poet’s purpose to insinuate that revelation was the right, nothing could better express his purpose, than making the *right* secured by the guards of Grace.

I will

Yet

“ Save me alike from foolish Pride,
 “ Or impious Discontent,
 “ At aught thy Wisdom has denied,
 “ Or aught thy Goodness lent §.

“ Teach me to feel another’s Woe,
 “ To hide the Fault I see ;
 “ That Mercy I to others show,
 “ That Mercy show to me *.

Upon the whole, this Prayer may be considered as an epitome of, or rather as a short comment on, his

I will add, that one principal design of the Essay on Man is to shew, that *reason*, aided by *natural religion*, can at most but rectify our passions; reason is a *guard*, but no *guide*: and our poet evidently points out the *guide*, which is REVELATION, the goal to which hope leads the good man.

“ For him alone Hope leads from goal to goal,
 “ And opens still, and opens on his soul ;
 “ Till lengthen’d on to FAITH, and unconfin’d,
 “ It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.”

§ This foolish Pride is finely ridiculed in several parts of the Essay, particularly in the following couplet :

“ Ask for what end the heav’nly bodies shine,
 “ Earth for whose use? Pride answers,—’Tis for mine.”

The impious and ridiculous discontent of mankind, is likewise admirably exposed in the following lines, among others in this Essay.

“ What would this man? Now upward will he soar,
 “ And, little less than Angel, would be more ;
 “ Now looking downward, just as griev’d appears,
 “ To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.”

* These benevolent sentiments are diffused throughout the whole Essay; and are in truth summed up in the following couplet :

“ Happier as kinder, in whate’er degree,
 “ And height of Bliss is height of Charity.”

Essay

Essay on Man; and it is impossible for the most hardened infidel to read these stanzas without being impressed with a serious sense of religious truths, and of religious duties †.

To give the reader a just idea of our author's attention to method in his moral system, it is proper to remark, that the *Essay on Man* was intended to have been comprised in four books, as we are assured by the editor.

The first the author has given us, under that title, in the four epistles which have been the subject of the foregoing critical observations.

The second, was to have consisted of the same number, and to have treated, 1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those arts and sciences, and the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable: together with those which are useless, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use, and application of the different capacities of men. 4. Of the use of learning; of the science of the world; and of wit; concluding with a satire against the misapplication of them, illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

The third book regarded civil regimen or the science of politics, in which the several forms of a republic were to have been examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious worship, so far as they affect society; between which the author always supposed there was the closest connection and most intimate relation: So that this part would have treated of civil and religious society in their full extent.

The fourth and last book, concerned private ethics, or practical morality; considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

† This prayer was translated into French by one Mons. Le Franck, a bigotted catholic: who afterward coming to reflect that it contained the strongest censure of superstition and persecution; thought proper to apologize for his translation.

The

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested and communicated to Lord Bolingbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more, and was intended for the only work of his riper years; but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements, from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and at last in a manner laid aside.

But as this was, as we are told, our author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his own strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra poetæ* which now remain, it will not be uninteresting to enter somewhat more particularly into the scope and design of these projected books.

The first, as it treats of man in the abstract, and considers him in general, under all his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes the subjects, of the three following: so that,

The second book was to take up again the first and second epistles of the first book; and to treat of man in his intellectual capacity at large, as explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as has been said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, and occasionally in the other three; of which an account is hereafter given.

The third book, in like manner, was to re-assume the subject of the third epistle of the first, which treats of man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the poet afterwards conceived might be better executed in an EPIC POEM; as the action would make it more animated, and the fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false governments and religions, should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples. The plan of this poem, which was to have been entitled Brutus, will be explained hereafter.

The fourth and last book, was to pursue the subject of the fourth epistle of the first, and to treat of ethics,

ethics, or practical morality, and would have consisted of many members; of which the four Moral Essays in the third volume, which is now under consideration, are detached portions: the two first, on the characters of *men* and *women*, being the introductory part of this book, which was to have included the whole.

For the sake of connection therefore, it will in the next place be proper to give some account of these four Moral Essays, which conclude the third volume of his works.

In the first, on the *Characters of Men*, our author takes notice of the difficulties in coming at the knowledge and true characters of men, arising from the diversity of their character, which he thus happily illustrates.

- " There's some Peculiar in each leaf and grain,
- " Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:
- " Shall only Man be taken in the gross?
- " Grant but as many sorts of Mind as Mofs."

After enumerating other causes which render this research so difficult, he mentions the dissimulation and caprice of mankind, under the following beautiful and striking figures.

- " Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,
- " Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?
- " On human Actions reason tho' you can,
- " It may be Reason, but it is not Man,
- " His principle of action once explore,
- " That instant 'tis his Principle no more.
- " Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,
- " You lose it in the moment you detect.

How bold, and at the same time how just, is this simile, whereby the poet illustrates the sudden change of the principle of action in man, which, among other causes, occasions the difficulty of determining his character!

This

This difficulty however, our author proceeds to observe, is not altogether owing to the obscurity of the object under contemplation, but in part arises from the defects of the observer, which is thus finely illustrated.

- “ Yet more ; the diff’rence is as great between
 “ The optics seeing, as the objects seen.
 “ All Manners take a tincture from our own ;
 “ Or come discolour’d through our Passions
 “ shown.
 “ Or Fancy’s beam enlarges, multiplies,
 “ Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.”

These images are beautifully appropriated, and are remarkably chaste and correct. With the same elegance and propriety, our author pursues the enumeration of the difficulties which obstruct our inquiry into the characters of men.

- “ Nor will Life’s stream for Observation stay,
 “ It hurries all too fast to mark their way :
 “ In vain sedate reflections we would make,
 “ When half our knowledge we must snatch, not
 “ take.
 “ Oft, in the Passions’ wild rotation tost,
 “ Our spring of action to ourselves is lost :
 “ Tir’d, not determin’d, to the last we yield,
 “ And what comes then is master of the field.
 “ As the last image of that troubled heap,
 “ When Sense subsides, and Fancy sports in sleep,
 “ (Tho’ past the recollection of the thought)
 “ Becomes the stuff of which our dream is
 “ wrought.”

This notion of the cause of dreams, whether physically true or not, is happily applied to explain why we are often at a loss to account for the motives which impel us to action.

Our author proceeds, in the next place, to detect the erroneous means by which we endeavour to judge
 of

of human characters, and shews first that we cannot determinè the motive from the action, as different actions proceed from the same motive.

- “ Behold ! if Fortune or a Mistress frowns,
 “ Some plunge in bus’ness, others shave their
 “ crowns :
 “ To ease the Soul of one oppressive weight,
 “ This quits an Empire, that embroils a State :
 “ The same adust complexion has impell’d
 “ Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.”

It is observable, that though the versification in these lines is smooth and poetical, yet there is not a single word which admits of inversion or transposition. They would preserve the same order, were they turned into prose ; and though you may destroy the rhyme, you cannot break the numbers and measure. Perhaps this is the best proof of genuine poetry, which is not tortured into verse by unnatural inversions and transpositions ; which always, in some degree, are injurious to perspicuity.

He then proves that the same action often proceeds from different motives.

- “ Not always Actions shew the man : we find
 “ Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind ;
 “ Perhaps Prosperity becalm’d his breast ;
 “ Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the east :
 “ Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,
 “ Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the
 “ Great :
 “ Who combats bravely, is not therefore brave,
 “ He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave :
 “ Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,
 “ His pride in Reas’ning, not in Acting lines.”

These reflections are extremely just and acute, and expressed with great conciseness and energy.

Another

Another error, that of judging men's characters from their station, the poet exposes in the following strain of delicate irony.

" Court-Virtues bear, like Gems, the highest
 " rate,
 " Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can pene-
 " trate:
 " In life's low vale the soil the Virtues like,
 " They please as beauties, here as wonders
 " strike.
 " Tho' the same sun, with all diffusive rays,
 " Blush in the Rose, and in the Di'mond blaze,
 " We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,
 " And justly set the Gem above the Flow'r."

These lines have uncommon merit. The ridicule is exquisite. The imagery is beautiful: and the just ordonnance of the figures admirably supported throughout.

The poet, in the last place, observes that the only clue to lead us to the true characters of men, and to unravel all the intricacies of their conduct, is the *RULING PASSION*. This he exemplifies in the character of Wharton, which is so inimitably drawn, that it is difficult to resist the pleasure of transcribing it; but it is needless to point out its beauties; since *characters* strike, and are imprinted in the memory of every common reader, while the *principles* of the poem make impressions on a few only.

Our author pursues his illustrations through a variety of characters, such as the debauchee, the glutton, the miser, the coquette, the courtier, &c. which he exhibits in a strain of exquisite ridicule, and at length concludes with the following elegant compliment to Lord Cobham.

" And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath,
 " Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:
 " Such

"Such in those moments as in all the past;
"Oh, save my Country, Heav'n!" shall be your
"last *."

In

* Lord Cobham, it seems, had perused this Epistle in the manuscript, and suggested some alterations, as may be concluded from the following original letters.

STOWE, Nov. 1, 1733.

"Though I have not modesty enough not to be pleased with
"your extraordinary compliment, I have wit enough to know
"how little I deserve it. You know all mankind are putting
"themselves upon the world for more than they are worth,
"and their friends are daily helping the deceit. But I am
"afraid I shall not pass for an absolute patriot, however I have
"the honour of having received a public testimony of your
"esteem and friendship, and am as proud of it as I could be of
"any advantage which could happen to me. As I remember,
"when I saw the Brouillion of this epistle, it was perplexed;
"you have now made it the contrary, and I think it is the
"clearest and the cleanest of all you have wrote. Don't you
"think you have bestowed too many lines on the old lecher?
"The instance itself is but ordinary, and I think should be
"shortened or changed. Thank you; and believe me to be
"most sincerely yours,

"COBHAM."

From the next letter it appears that Mr. POPE adopted his Lordship's hint.

STOWE, Nov. 8.

"I like your Lecher better now 'tis shorter; and the Gluton is a very good epigram. But they are both appetites, that
"from nature we indulge, as well for her ends, as our pleasure. A cardinal, in his way of pleasure, would have been
"a better instance. What do you think of an old Lady dressing her silver locks with pink, and ordering her coffin to be
"lined with white quilted sattin with gold fringe? Or Counsellor Vernon, retiring to enjoy himself with five thousand a
"year which he had got, and returning back to the Chancery
"to get a little more, when he could not speak so loud as to
"be heard? Or a Judge turned out coming again to the bar?—
"I mean that a passion or habit, that has not a natural foundation, fall in better with your subject, than any of our natural wants, which in some degree we cannot avoid pursuing
"to the last; and if a man has spirits or appetite enough to
"take a bit of either kind at parting, you may condemn him,
"but you would be proud to imitate him.

"I con-

In short, the poet, in this epistle, discovers great acuteness of observation, and an intimate knowledge of the secret workings of the human mind. His reasoning is convincing, and he has the art of preserving the strictest method of argument, without the least appearance of an affected regularity. Add to this, that his illustrations are apt and forcible, his characters happily finished, and his versification perfectly tuneful and harmonious.

Impartiality however must acknowledge, that we here and there meet with some faulty lines. Such, perhaps, the following may be deemed, where, speaking of the bird who calls whore and knave from his cage, he adds——

“ Tho’ many a passenger he rightly call,
“ You hold him no philosopher *at all*.”

These lines are in the familiar stile of common prosaic chit-chat; and the feeble expletives tacked to the end of the last line, for the sake of the rhyme, sink them almost even below that level.

“ I congratulate you upon the fine weather. ’Tis a strange thing that people of condition and men of parts must enjoy it in common with the rest of the world. But now I think on’t, their pursuits are generally after points of so great importance, that they do not enjoy it at all. I won’t trouble you any longer, but with the assurance of what I hope you are perfectly convinced of, that I am most sincerely yours,
C.”

From these letters his lordship appears to have been a man of sense and vivacity; his observations are just, liberal, and sprightly.

But where his Lordship speaks of the *Cardinal*, he quite mistakes the subject of the epistle; which concerns our natural, not unnatural passions. Our Poet’s pictures make, as he himself says, a *map of Man*, not of Monsters.

It must be added, in commendation of Mr. POPE, that on this, as on many other occasions, he prudently practised his own precept: ——And

“ Made use of ev’ry Friend, and ev’ry Foe.”

With

With respect to the next epistle, that is, the Essay on the *Characters of Women*, it has unquestionably great merit.

The poet has herein shewn himself a man of the world, and intimately acquainted with the motley groupe of female caprices; which he has indeed exposed with a great deal of wit and pointed satire; but surely the strokes are here and there much too harsh and severe.

However I may hazard my reputation by the comparison, I do not scruple, in some few instances, to prefer Dr. Young's Satire on Women, in his *Universal Passion*: though it is, upon the whole, greatly inferior to Mr. POPE's in point of versification, order, wit, sentiment, ease, and penetration into nature*.

In the passages alluded to, however, there appears to be in Young more of the *ridiculum acri* of Horace. What the learned commentator has observed, in his parallel between Horace and POPE, will, perhaps, in these instances, hold equally true between POPE and Young. What Young smiles at, POPE treats with the grave severity of Persius; and what POPE strikes with the caustic lightning of Juvenal, Young contents himself with turning into ridicule.

The latter laughs at their foibles with such becoming pleasantry and good humour, that while they blush to see those foibles exposed, they are not angry with the author of the detection. The former, on the other hand, chastises their levities with so severe a lash, that the lively glow of resentment prevails over the suffusion of a modest blush. Young, in few words, corrects their peccant habits by gentle alteratives, while POPE irritates them by strong corrosives.

* Let not the reader imagine that any general comparison is intended between these two satirists. Mr. POPE's superiority is so manifest, that a man would expose himself to ridicule who should attempt to compare them. All that is meant is, that here and there Young has succeeded by some nicer touches better suited to the delicacy of the subject.

But

But a few instances, impartially selected, will best determine the propriety of these animadversions.

The opening of this epistle, which is addressed to a Lady, has great merit. It begins thus, with graceful ease and pleasantry.

- “ Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
 “ Most Women have no Characters at all.”
 “ Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
 “ And best distinguish’d by black, brown, or
 “ fair.
 “ How many pictures of one Nymph we view,
 “ All how unlike each other, all how true!
 “ Arcadia’s Countess, here, in ermin’d pride,
 “ Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.
 “ Here Fannia, *leering* * on her own good man,
 “ And there, a naked Leda with a Swan.
 “ Let then the Fair one beautifully cry,
 “ In Magdalen’s loose hair and lifted eye,
 “ Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
 “ With simp’ring Angels, Palms, and Harps di-
 “ vine ;
 “ Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it,
 “ If Folly grow romantic, I must paint it.
 “ Come then, the colours and the ground pre-
 “ pare !
 “ Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air ;
 “ Choose a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it
 “ Catch, e’er she change, the Cynthia of this mi-
 “ nute.”

Thus far the raillery is exquisitely pleasant ; thus far is elegant and poetical. *Si sic omnia !* But mark what follows, where the poet exemplifies this princi-

* In this passage the poet meant to display the contrast between *Fannia* looking at her husband in the attitude of a modest matron ; and *Fannia* in the looser posture of an unattired wanton. By the use of the epithet *leering*, the poet marks the lubricity of *Fannia* ; and as her *lubricity* would certainly betray itself while feigning conjugal affection, so the term *leering* has a peculiar beauty, though it seems, in some degree, to weaken the contrast.

ple of female inconsistency in particular characters :
and first in the affected and flatteringly.

- “ Rufa, whose eye quick glancing o’er the Park,
“ Attracts each light gay meteor of a Spark,
“ Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,
“ As Sappho’s di’monds with her dirty sinock ;
“ Or Sappho at her toilet’s greasy task *,
“ With Sappho fragrant at an ev’ning Mask :
“ So morning infects that in muck begun,
“ Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.”

These lines, it must be confessed, are strongly satirical and witty. But are they not too harsh and inelegant for the occasion? The true end of satire, is reformation. But was Sappho likely to become less a flatterer, by being thus rudely reprehended, in terms as foul, as that part of her attire could be which gave the poet offence?

With respect to the simile of the morning insect, the thought is not original ; nor does it seem to be appropriated to illustrate the satire with that propriety for which our author was remarkable †.

There is great beauty however and elegance in the following lines of Mr. POPE.

“ Ladies,

* What would our poet have said, had he lived to see the fashion of our modern Belles, who nightly encircle their powdered curls with a silken net, and do not suffer a comb to discompose them, for—I dare not say how long.

† Young, it may be thought, perhaps, has ridiculed the affected and flatteringly, with a softer pen.

Affectation he has thus exposed :

- “ Here might I sing of Memmia’s mincing mien,
“ And all the movements of the soft machine :
“ How two red lips affected *Zephyrs* blow,
“ To cool the Bohea, and inflame the Beau ;
“ While one white finger, and a thumb, conspire
“ To lift the cup, and make the world admire.”

The

" Ladies, like variegated Tulips, show ;
 " 'Tis to their Changes half their charms we owe ;
 " Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
 " Their happy Spots the nice admirer take."

But in the following instance, his indignation seems to have prevailed over his delicacy.

" See Sin in State, majestically drunk ;
 " Proud as a Peerefs, prouder as a Punk ;
 " Chaste to her Husband, frank to all beside,
 " A teeming Mistrefs, but a barren Bride.
 " What then ? let Blood and Body bear the fault,
 " Her Head's untouch'd, that noble feat of
 " Thought :
 " Such this day's doctrine—in another fit
 " She sins with Poets thro' pure Love of Wit.
 " What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain ?
 " Cæsar and Tall-boy ; Charles and Charle-
 " ma'ne."

I am free to own, that if the wit in these lines was much more brilliant than it is, yet it would not atone for the inelegance of this passage. One might be apt to suspect that the poet was the partner of her sin, and that he penned these lines, while he yet smarted with the proofs of her infidelity.

Our author however makes us amends in the character of the witty and refined lady.

" Wise Wretch ! with pleasures too refin'd to
 " please ;
 " With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease :

The character of the flattern likewise is humourously described by Young, who shews great address in the two concluding lines, where he polishes the edge of satire, by first paying a just compliment to the charms of the sex.

" Women were made to give our eyes delight,
 " A female sloven is an odious sight."

" With

- “ With too much Quickness ever to be taught ;
 “ With too much Thinking to have common
 “ Thought :
 “ You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give,
 “ And die of nothing but a Rage to live.”

In these sentiments, there are a peculiar sprightli-
 ness, poignance and propriety. But the author, at
 this time, seems to have been so much out of temper
 with the fair sex, that he cannot long keep within the
 bounds of decorum, which he again breaks through
 in the following lines.

- “ Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit ;
 “ For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.”

This is downright rudeness, without one spark of
 wit. More instances might be selected of harsh and
 indelicate satire in this epistle * ; but as it is a much
 more pleasing office to display beauties, than to detect
 blemishes, let it suffice to have made these few sacri-
 fices to impartiality, and let us turn our eyes to the
 following exquisite portrait of prudence without sym-
 pathy.

- “ Yet Cloe sure was form'd without a spot.”——
 “ Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.
 “ With ev'ry pleasing, ev'ry prudent part,
 “ Say, what can Cloe want ?—She wants a Heart.

* We here and there too meet with instances of faulty versifi-
 cation. For instance, speaking of the difficulty of female in-
 consistencies, he says——

- “ —How should equal colours *do the knack* ?
 “ Cameleons who can paint in white and black ?

The simile here is extremely just and beautiful: but the
 phrase of *do the knack* is low, and unworthy the pen of so great
 a genius.

- " She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought ;
 " But never, never, reach'd one gen'rous
 " Thought.
 " Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
 " Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.
 " So very reasonable, so unmov'd,
 " As never yet to love, or to be lov'd.
 " She, while her Lover pants upon her breast,
 " Can mark the figures on an Indian chest :
 " Or when she sees her Friend in deep despair,
 " Observes how much a Chintz exceeds Mo-
 " hair."

This is inimitably characteristical. This is penned with the true ease and spirit of polite satire. This is, *ridentem dicere verum*.

Our author proceeds with great accuracy to remark, that though the particular characters of women are, as he has shewn, more various than that of men, yet the general characteristic of the softer sex is more uniform, as to the *ruling passion*.

- " In Men, we various Ruling Passions find ;
 " In Women, two almost divide the kind ;
 " Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
 " The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of
 " Sway."

Hence, his friend and commentator observes with his wonted acuteness, we see the perpetual necessity that women lie under of disguising their ruling passion, which is not the case in men. Now the variety of arts employed to this purpose, must needs draw them into infinite contradictions, even in those actions from whence their general and obvious character is denominated.

Having established these, as the two *ruling passions* in the sex, the poet goes on to shew how unsuccessful they are in the pursuit of these objects of their desires, which he finely illustrates: first, as to *Power*—Having observed, in the preceding line, that

that every lady would be queen for life, he adds——

“ Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens !
 “ Pow’r all their end, but Beauty all the means :
 “ In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage ;
 “ As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age :
 “ For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam ;
 “ No thought of peace or happiness at home.
 “ But Wisdom’s triumph is well-tim’d Retreat,
 “ As hard a science to the Fair as Great !
 “ Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,
 “ Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,
 “ Worn out in public, weary ev’ry eye,
 “ Nor leave one sigh behind them when they
 “ die.”

Good sense, strong satire, and fine poetry are happily combined in this passage: there is great merit likewise in the following simile, which illustrates the miserable fate which attends the sex in their unsuccessful pursuit of *Pleasure*.

“ Pleasures the sex, as children Birds, pursue,
 “ Still out of reach, but never out of view ;
 “ Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at
 “ most,
 “ To covet flying, and regret when lost *.”

* Beautiful, however, as this simile is, impartiality obliges me to own, that I give the preference to Dr. Young’s on the same subject, which he thus illustrates——

“ Pleasures are few, and fewer we enjoy,
 “ Pleasure, like *quick-silver*, is *bright* and *cloy* :
 “ We strive to grasp it, with our utmost skill,
 “ Still it *eludes us*, and it *glitters* still ;
 “ If seiz’d at last, compute your mighty gains,
 “ What is it, but rank poison in your veins ?”

This simile is finely conceived, and every word is happily chosen to sustain the comparison, which most aptly illustrates the fugacious nature of pleasure, our vain efforts to seize it, and its baneful effects, when seized.

Mr. POPE having exposed the fruitless pursuit of the two ruling passions which govern the sex, breaks out into the following pathetic lamentation, which is infinitely affecting.

“ See how the World its Veterans rewards !
 “ A Youth of Frolics, an old Age of Cards ;
 “ Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
 “ Young without Lovers, old without a Friend ;
 “ A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot,
 “ Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot !”

Alas ! there is not a public assembly, or a private rout, but what affords too many melancholy examples of this moving and incomparable description.

The poet, towards the conclusion of the essay, turns from the severity of satire, to friendly admonition, in the following beautiful apostrophe.

“ Ah ! Friend ! to dazzle let the Vain design ;
 “ *To raise the Thought, and touch the Heart be*
 “ *thine !*
 “ That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues
 “ the Ring,
 “ Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded
 “ thing :
 “ So when the Sun’s broad beam has tir’d the
 “ fight,
 “ All mild ascends the Moon’s more sober light,
 “ Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines,
 “ And unobserv’d the glaring Orb declines.”

Nothing can be more poetical than this imagery, nor more artfully conducted. Every epithet is nicely appropriated to heighten the figure, and embellish the verse *.

This

† Though nothing can be more delightful to the imagination, than the above passage in Mr. POPE, yet the following lines
 of

This passage, however, leads me to mark one general objection to this essay of Mr. POPE's, which is, that though he strongly satirizes the foibles and follies of the softer sex, yet he scarce ever relaxes the severity of satire, by interspersing moral precepts which may teach them to avoid or amend what is reprehensible. There is but one single line in the whole essay, in which he has offered any thing like *advice* to the fair, and that stands distinguished above in Italics,

Young, on the other hand, occasionally softens the asperity of satire, and appears in the more amiable character of a friend and monitor. How moral, how tender, and persuasive is the conclusion of the fifth satire, where he directs the fair *whom*, and *how*, they should study to charm.

" Then please the *best*: and know, for men of
" sense

" Your strongest charms, are native innocence.

" *Arts* on the mind, like *paint* upon the face,

" Fright him, that's worth your love, from your
" embrace.

of Dr. Young's perhaps, will be thought to approach nearer to the heart.

" Ah! why so vain, tho' blooming in thy spring,

" Thou *shining*, *frail*, *ador'd*, and *wretched* thing!

" Old age *will* come, disease *may* come before,

" *Fifteen* is full as mortal as *threescore*.

" Thy fortune and thy charms may soon decay;

" But grant these *fugitives* prolong their stay,

" Their basis totters, their foundation shakes,

" Life that supports them, in a moment breaks;

" Then *wrought* into the soul let virtue shine,

" The *ground* eternal, as the *work* divine."

The reader will observe, that there is the same moral turn of sentiment, and that in fact the same *precept* is inculcated in both. But in Mr. POPE, the splendour of the imagery so dazzles the imagination, that it diverts the precept from the heart.

- " In simple manners all the secret lies,
 " Be kind and virtuous, you'll be blest and
 " wife.
 " Vain show, and noise, intoxicate the brain,
 " Begin with giddiness, and end in pain.
 " Affect not empty Fame, and idle praise,
 " Which, all those wretches I describe, betrays ;
 " Your sex's glory 'tis to shine unknown,
 " Of all applause, be fondest of your own.
 " Beware the fever of the *mind* ! that thirst
 " With which this age is eminently curst.
 " To drink of pleasure but inflames desire,
 " And abstinence alone can quench the fire :
 " Take pain from life, and terror from the
 " tomb,
 " Give peace in hand, and promise bliss to
 " come."

How exquisitely chaste is Young's idea of female modesty !

- " *Naked* in nothing should a woman be,
 " But veil *her very wit* with *Modesty* ;
 " Let man *discover*, let not her *display*,
 " But yield her *charms of mind* with sweet
 " delay."

With what propriety and delicacy does he define female beauty, and explain the cause of those powerful and lasting impressions, which we receive from forms in which there is no strong degree of external attraction !

- " What's female beauty, but an air divine
 " Through which the mind's all-gentle graces
 " shine ?
 " They, like the sun, irradiate all between ;
 " The body charms, because the soul is seen.
 " Hence, men are often captives of a face,
 " They know not why, of no peculiar grace ;
 " Some

"Some forms, tho' bright, no mortal man can
"bear;

"Some, none resist, tho' not exceeding fair."

In short, Young, as I have premised, though by no means equal to Mr. POPE in the various essentials of a fine poet, seems, nevertheless, in these particular points of comparison, to be more master of that easy pleasant raillery, and of that urbanity and tenderness, which so soft a subject seems peculiarly to demand *.

Mr. POPE, every now and then, loses sight of Horace's precept——

"Ne scutica dignum, horribili sectere flagello."

* Mr. POPE's sentiments of Dr. Young, as expressed to his friend the present Bishop of Gloucester, may not be unenterprising to the Reader.

Mr. POPE thought Dr. Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets. But his having a very good heart, enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterward with honour.

The want of reasonable ideas in this ingenious writer, so pregnant with imagination, occasioned the same absence and distraction in company, which has frequently been observed to beset philosophic men, through the abundance of theirs. But his absence being on that account attended with much absurdity, it was not only excused, but enjoyed. He gave, throughout his life, many wonderful examples of this turn, or rather debility, of mind; of which, one will suffice. When he had determined to go into orders, he addressed himself, like an honest man, for the best directions in the study of theology. But to whom did he apply? It may, perhaps, be thought, to Sherlock or Atterbury; to Burnet or Hare. No! to Mr. POPE: who, in a youthful frolic, recommended Thomas Aquinas to him. With this treasure he retired, in order to be free from interruption, to an obscure place in the suburbs. His director hearing no more of him in six months, and apprehending he might have carried the jest too far, sought after him, and found him out just in time to prevent an irretrievable derangement.

In truth, his satires in general are liable to this objection: as was kindly intimated to him by his benevolent friend Arbuthnot, who advised him rather to study to reform, than to chastise.

But when female characters are the objects of satire, such severity is particularly reprehensible. It betrays not only a want of good breeding, but of good policy. It is our interest to shade the defects of the softer sex, the better to conceal our own; for since we are all, in some degree, under the influence of their attractions, the more we depreciate them, the lower we degrade ourselves.

The two remaining Epistles on the *Use of Riches*, are members of the large design above described. The extremes of avarice and profusion in general, are treated of in the first epistle; the latter being confined to one particular branch of profusion, namely, the vanity of expence in people of wealth and condition: It is therefore a corollary to the preceding, in the same manner as the Epistle on the *Characters of Women*, is to that of the *Knowledge and Characters of Men*.

Nevertheless, these epistles were not published in the order in which they stand in the octavo edition, and which indeed the nature of the subject requires, the latter having been penned and made public before the former, on an occasion which will be explained hereafter.

The first of these epistles is penned with great ease and vivacity. Mr. POPE, nevertheless, somewhere says, that it cost him a great deal of labour and attention; and he has been heard to declare, in private conversation, that what he wrote fastest, always pleased most*.

* An instance of which he gave, not only in the Rape of the Lock, but in the Poem on the Characters of Women, just now spoken of; which he wrote at once in a heat, not of malice or resentment, but of pure, though strong, poetical fire: And, indeed, notwithstanding the objections above made to it, it well deserved the distinguished reception it met with.

This

This epistle, therefore, having been *laboured* into *ease*, may be among the reasons why it is not so pleasing, at least to the writer of these sheets, as those which precede it.

It is true, we meet with many fallies of keen wit, and strokes of fine poetry in it; but they are more thinly scattered than in the foregoing essays. At the same time, it would be difficult to point out any glaring blemishes: in short, compared with *his* other works, it has, some few inimitable passages excepted, too much of the *mediocre* in it: and it must necessarily please less now than at the time of its first publication, as most of the facts and characters recorded in it, and which then made it interesting, have been long since forgotten.

Nevertheless, there is great merit in the following lines of this epistle, which is by way of dialogue between our Poet and Lord Bathurst †, to whom it is addressed, wherein our author shews, by a witty transposition, that the utmost which wealth can bestow is but the power of diversifying the three necessities of life into various modes of luxury.

“ P. What Riches give us let us then inquire :

“ Meat, Fire, and Clothes. B. What more ?

“ P. Meat, Clothes, and Fire.

“ Is this too little ? would you more than live ?

“ Alas ! 'tis more than Turner finds they give.

“ Alas ! 'tis more than (all his Visions past)

“ Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last !

“ What can they give ? to dying Hopkins, Heirs ;

“ To Chartres, Vigour ; Japhet, Nose and Ears ?

“ Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippia glow,

“ In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below ? *

† This nobleman, who has ever been a friend to men of learning and genius, distinguished Mr. POPE above all others, and associated with him on the footing of particular intimacy.

* The lines which follow, concerning *Narfes*, are indecent and filthy. It is degrading genius to adopt illustrations which are obvious to a link-boy.

The images likewise by which the poet illustrates the extremes of parsimony and prodigality, are extremely beautiful and poetical.

“ Riches, like insects, when conceal’d they lie,
 “ Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.
 “ Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
 “ Sees but a backward steward for the Poor ;
 “ This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare ;
 “ The next, a Fountain, spouting through his
 “ Heir,
 “ In lavish streams to quench a Country’s thirst,
 “ And men and dogs shall drink him till they
 “ burst.”

But the following exemplification of the extreme of parsimony, in the character of *Cotta*, is as striking as any perhaps our poet ever delineated.

“ Old Cotta sham’d his fortune and his birth,
 “ Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth :
 “ What tho’ (the use of barb’rous spits forgot)
 “ His kitchen vy’d in coolness with his grot ?
 “ His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor’d,
 “ With soups unbought and sallads bless’d his
 “ board ?
 “ If Cotta liv’d on pulse, it was no more
 “ Than Bramins, Saints, and Sages did before ;
 “ To cram the Rich was prodigal expence,
 “ And who would take the Poor from Providence ?
 “ Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old
 “ hall,
 “ Silence without, and fasts within the wall ;
 “ No rafter’d roofs with dance and tabor sound,
 “ No noon-tide bell invites the country round :
 “ Tenants with sighs the smoakless tow’rs survey,
 “ And turn th’ unwilling steeds another way :
 “ Benighted wanderers, the forest o’er,
 “ Curs’d the sav’d candle, and unop’ning door ;
 “ While

" While the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,
" Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat."

This passage affords instances of various beauties. In the first ten lines there is a great deal of sprightly raillery, pleasant irony, and sarcastic wit. Those which immediately follow are beautifully descriptive, they are perfectly picturesque.

The other extreme of prodigality, exemplified in the character of his son, is not inferior.

The poet then proceeds to point out the *true use* of riches in the following beautiful lines.

" To Worth or Want well weigh'd, be Bounty
" giv'n,
" And ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n;
" (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)
" Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
" Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd;
" As Poison heals, in just proportion us'd:
" In heaps, like Ambergris, a stink it lies,
" But well dispers'd, is incense to the skies."

These figures admirably illustrate the precept which the poet here inculcates; and which is likewise happily exemplified in the portrait of the *Man of Ross*. Benevolence is there painted in a most amiable light*. Few, however, are unacquainted with this picture; let us therefore turn to the noble apostrophe which follows.

The poet having observed that the fund for the diffusive bounty which the *Man of Ross* displayed,

* As a proof of the pleasure which our author sincerely felt in painting virtue, hear what he says in one of his letters to Mr. Bethel.

" I have been so pleased when I meet with a good example
" or character (as it is a curiosity now) that I have sent express
" inquiries after the particulars, to be exact in the celebration
" of it; and with great contentment find, that what I write of
" the good works of the *Man of Ross*, is to a tittle true."

was but five hundred pounds a year; thus breaks forth——

“ Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, with-
“ draw your blaze!

“ Ye little Stars! hide your diminish’d rays.”

Lord B. then, by way of surprise, makes the following interrogations.

“ B. And what? no monument, inscription,
“ stone?

“ His race, his form, his name almost unknown?”

To which the poet replies:

“ P. Who builds a Church to God, and not to
“ Fame,

“ Will never mark the marble with his Name;

“ Go, search it there, where to be born and die,

“ Of rich and poor, makes all the history;

“ Enough, that Virtue fill’d the space between;

“ Prov’d by the ends of being, to have been.

“ When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend

“ The wretch, who living fav’d a candle’s end:

“ Should’ring God’s altar, a vile image stands,

“ Belies his features, nay extends his hands;

“ That live-long wig, which Gorgon’s self might
“ own,

“ Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.

“ Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend!

“ And see, what comfort it affords our end!”

Strong satire, sound morality, and poignant ridicule, here charm us alternately.

The observant reader must have remarked many instances of the happy address with which our poet glides into method, as it were unperceived, without the affectation of order. Here the two concluding lines prepare us for one of the most highly finished
and

and striking descriptions, of any perhaps in our poet's works.

Having shewn, in the instance of *Cotta* and his son, that riches can afford no real happiness in life, he proceeds to shew that they can secure us no comfort at our end. This he exemplifies in the character of Villiers, who having been possessed of fifty thousand pounds a year, and filled many of the highest posts in the kingdom, at length died wretchedly in a remote inn in Yorkshire; which the poet thus finely describes.

- “ In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-
 “ hung,
 “ With floor of plaister, and the walls of dung,
 “ On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 “ With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,
 “ The George and Garter dangling from that
 “ bed
 “ Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
 “ Great Villiers lies—Alas! how chang'd from
 “ him,
 “ That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!
 “ Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
 “ The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
 “ Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring
 “ Of mimic statesmen, and their merry King.
 “ No Wit to flatter, left of all his store!
 “ No fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more.
 “ There, Victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
 “ And fame; this lord of useless thousands ends.”

With what happy skill has the poet heightened the distress of this Lord's miserable end, by the glaring contrast of his former splendor! How sensibly we feel the depth of his misery, when our imagination compares the proud Alcove of Cliveden, the Bower of love; with the poor flock bed repaired with straw, and all the scanty wretched apparatus with which the poet has furnished it. But the beauty of description, is not the only merit of this passage.

The

The poet, having shewn that wealth, abused, in either extreme of avarice or profusion, can afford no enjoyment to the possessor, he goes on farther to shew that it becomes a curse, which is the moral of the poem, and is finely illustrated in the admirable fable of Sir Balaam, which is too publickly known and admired, to require any critical animadversion.

The next epistle on the *use of riches*, addressed to Lord Burlington, treats, as has been intimated, of one branch of profusion only, which is the vanity of expence in persons of fortune and rank.

This abounds with beauties, and in an easy pleasant vein of exquisite ridicule exposes the preposterous modes of wrong taste.

- “ For what has Virro painted, built, and planted ?
- “ Only to show, how many Tastes he wanted.
- “ What brought Sir Visto’s ill got wealth to waste ?
- “ Some Demon whisper’d, “ Visto ! have a
“ Taste.”
- “ Heav’n visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
- “ And needs no Rod but Ripley with a Rule.”

The poet then, after paying a compliment to Lord Burlington, who was at that time publishing the designs of Inigo Jones, and of the modern ornaments of Italy, proceeds to rally the absurdities which result from injudicious and awkward imitation.

- “ Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble rules
- “ Fill half the land with Imitating-Fools ;
- “ Who random drawings from your sheets shall
“ take,
- “ And of one beauty many blunders make ;
- “ Load some vain Church with old Theatric state,
- “ Turn Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate ;
- “ Reverse your Ornaments ; and hang them all
- “ On some patch’d dog-hole ek’d with ends of
“ wall ;
- “ Then clap four slices of Pilaster on’t,
- “ That, lac’d with bits of rustic, makes a Front.
- “ Shall

“ Shall call the winds through long arcades to
 “ roar,
 “ Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door ;
 “ Conscious they act a true Palladian Part,
 “ And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.”

There is a great deal of true wit and pleasantry in these lines. But the poet having thus pleasantly and sarcastically ridiculed false taste, proceeds to shew wherein *true taste* consists: and first, he observes that *good sense* is the foundation of *true taste*, whose office it is to embellish nature with suitable ornaments.

* * * * *

“ In all, let Nature never be forgot,
 “ But treat the Goodefs like a modest fair,
 “ Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare ;
 “ Let not each beauty ev’ry where be spy’d,
 “ Where half the skill is decently to hide.
 “ He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
 “ Surprizes, varies, and conceals the Bounds.”

There is great delicacy in this illustration of the modest fair*: and the following personification of Genius is highly poetical.

“ Consult the *Genius* of the Place in all ;
 “ *That* tells the Waters or to rise, or fall ;
 “ Or helps th’ ambitious Hill the Heav’ns to scale,
 “ Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale ;

* It is much to be wished that our lovely Belles were convinced of the utility of this precept, not to *over-dress*. The just observance of it, would greatly improve their charms; as there are few, who do not, in some degree, disfigure themselves by a superfluity of ill-assorted ornaments. A certain degree of plainness and simplicity, gives us an idea of innocence and modesty; and these softer charms, whatever women may think, are much more inviting than all the decorations of dress, or graces of coquetry.

“ Calls

- " Calls in the Country, catches op'ning Glades,
 " Joins willing Woods, and varies Shades from
 " Shades;
 " Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending
 " Lines;
 " Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs."

The poet displays admirable skill in the management of these bold figures, which are as chaste and correct, as they are sublime and beautiful. What a noble and delightful design has he here depicted! And with what mastery of language is every epithet happily selected gradually to raise, and finally to perfect, the representation of this enchanting scene!

How unlike to this, is *Timon's* idea of magnificence, which displays neither sense nor taste, and which is admirably ridiculed in the following inimitable description.

- " At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,
 " Where all cry out, " What fums are thrown
 " away!"
 " So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,
 " Soft and Agreeable come never there.
 " Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a
 " draught
 " As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.
 " To compass this, his building is a Town,
 " His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:
 " Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,
 " A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!
 " Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
 " The whole a labour'd Quarry above ground.
 " Two Cupids squirt before: a Lake behind
 " Improves the keenness of the Northern wind.
 " His Gardens next your admiration call,
 " On every side you look, behold the Wall!
 " No pleasing intricacies intervene,
 " No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
 " Grove nods at Grove, each Alley has a brother,
 " And half the platform just reflects the other.

" The

" The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,
 " Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees ;
 " With here a Fountain, never to be play'd ;
 " And there a Summer-house, that knows no
 " shade ;
 " Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bow'rs ;
 " There Gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs ;
 " Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
 " And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn."

The shafts of ridicule perhaps never bore a sharper point than in the foregoing description, which is so incomparably fine and striking, that it is no wonder it raised the resentment which, we shall presently see, it excited. It is observable likewise, with what happy dexterity the poet, in exposing the absurdities of false taste, has negatively prescribed the rules of true taste.

Timon's study, his furniture, his loaded table, his awkward hospitality, next become the objects of keen raillery : but to select all the beauties of this piece, would be to transcribe the poem, which he concludes with a compliment to his two noble friends, who set examples of magnificence in planting and building, where both sense and taste concur.

" Who then shall grace, or who improve the
 " Soil ?
 " Who plants like *Bathurst* *, or who builds like
 " *Boyle*."

* The beautiful plantations at this nobleman's estate at *Cirencester* have indeed graced the soil, which of itself is far from being the most inviting. It is remarkable that his Lordship, as I have been well assured, began these plantations, in which he has displayed such an elegance of taste, after he had reached his fortieth year ; and he has had the rare felicity not only of living to see them in a state of perfection, but of preserving such a degree of health and vigour, as enable him to enjoy the delightful scenes he may be said to have created. In his early days, he not only figured in the political world, but he was the delight of every social circle : And even now, at an age to which few advance, he still retains that cheerfulness and urbanity which at once refine and enliven conversation.

There

There is one admirable beauty in the conclusion of this poem which must not be omitted, where the poet, in these two beautiful lines, gives a short summary of his precepts for true taste,

“ ’Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence,
 “ And Splendor borrows all her rays from Sense.”

How just the thought! How poetical the expression! This is to attain the true end of poetry; for at the same time that it convinces the judgment, it charms the imagination.

The character of Timon, as might well have been expected, raised a violent outcry* against the poet, on a supposition that his satire was pointed at a noble Duke, who was, in fact, more distinguished by his magnificence, than his elegance.

It was impossible for our poet to prove the innocence of his intention, which rested only in his own mind. But every thing was done to palliate the matter, and, as far as possible, to remove the imputation.

This essay, however, was so well received by the public, that in a short time, it passed into a third edition. On the publication of it, our author addressed a letter to Lord Burlington, wherein he takes notice that the clamour raised about his epistle, could not give him so much pain, as he received pleasure in seeing the general zeal of the world in the cause of a great man who is beneficent, and the particular warmth of his noble friend in that of a private man who was innocent.

“ It was not the poem,” says he, “ that deserved
 “ this from you, for as I had the honour to be your
 “ friend, I would not treat you quite like a poet:
 “ but sure the writer deserved more candor even
 “ from those who knew him not, than to promote a

* It was after the violent outcry against our author on this occasion, that the first Epistle on the use of Riches, was written.

“ report

“ report which in regard to that noble person, was
 “ impertinent, in regard to me, villainous. Yet I
 “ had no great cause to wonder, that a character
 “ belonging to twenty should be applied to one,
 “ since, by that means, nineteen would escape the
 “ ridicule. I was too well content with my know-
 “ ledge of that noble person’s opinion in this affair to
 “ trouble the public about it.

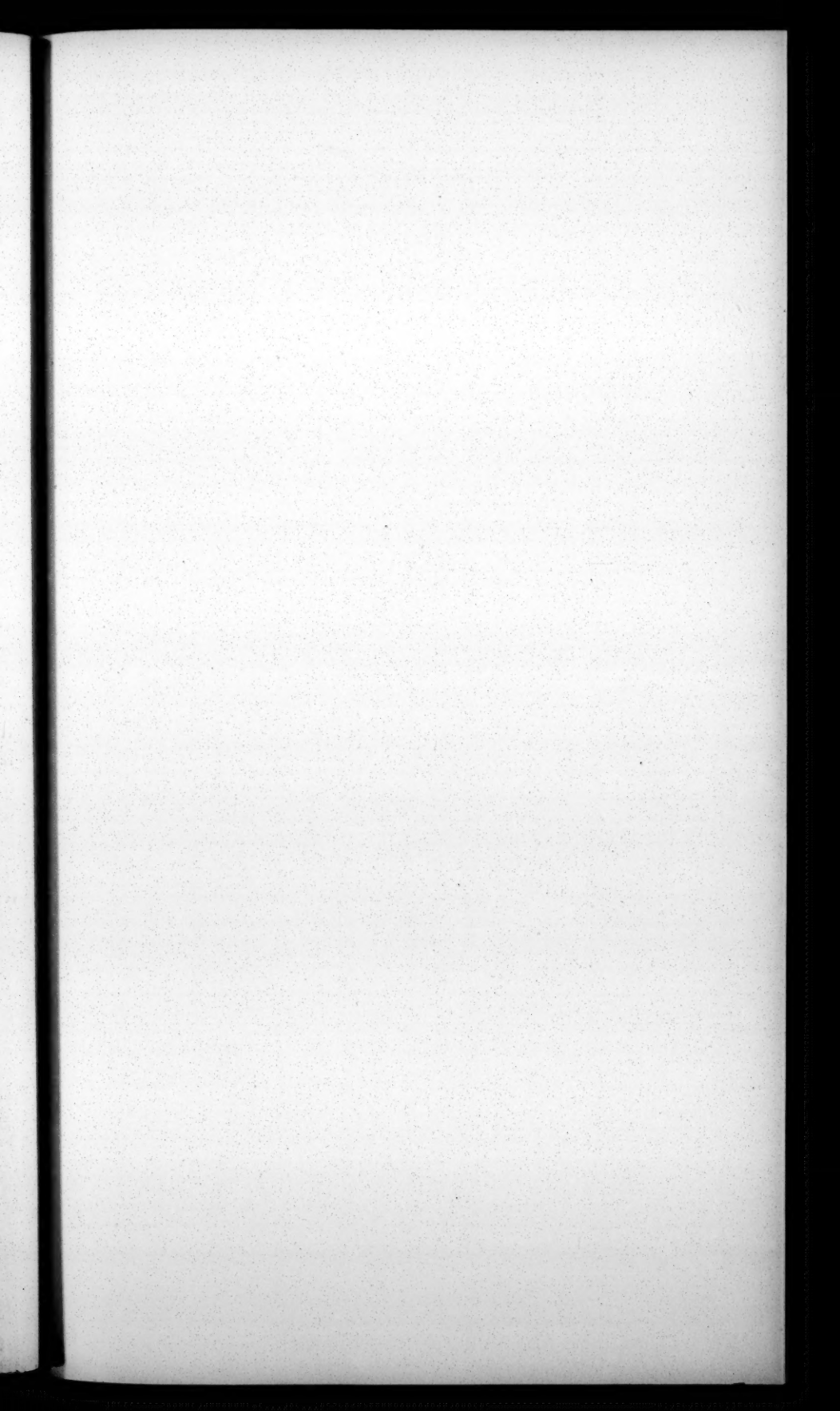
“ Since malice and mistake,” he continues, “ are so
 “ long dying, I have taken the opportunity of a third
 “ edition, to declare his belief, not only of my inno-
 “ cence, but of their malignity; of the former of
 “ which my own heart is as conscious, as I fear some
 “ of theirs must be of the latter. His humanity feels
 “ a concern for the injury done to me, while his great-
 “ ness of mind can bear with indifference the insult
 “ offered to himself.”

Towards the conclusion he adds,——“ I have
 “ learned there are some who would rather be wicked
 “ than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer to
 “ attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave
 “ my betters in the quiet possession of their idols,
 “ their groves, and their high places; and change
 “ my subject from their pride to their meanness,
 “ from their vanities to their miseries, and as the
 “ only way to avoid misconstructions, to lessen of-
 “ fences, and not to multiply ill-natured applications,
 “ I may probably in my next, make use of real
 “ names, instead of fictitious ones..

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

“ report

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